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Are Vancouverites too cool for Valentine's Day?

Yay and nay. Surrey residents are all over Feb. 14, according to Google Trends, but the same can't be said for us

Is Surrey a smokin' romance incubator? Does Vancouver harbour a concentration of Valentine's Grinches?

Canadians in general are pretty apathetic about the holiday, with 72 per cent of respondents in a Research Now poll conducted last week saying they don't have strong feelings about it one way or the other.

But a quick search of Google Trends Wednesday revealed that Surrey was the city with the highest volume of Google searches in the country this year for "Valentine's Day" and related terms — while Vancouver counted just over half as many.

So what gives, Vancouver?

The mayor's office was quick to offer some positive spin, releasing its own equally unscientific counter-analysis.

"We found that Vancouver scores substantially above Surrey in search volume for 'romance' (Vancouver has a rating of 93 vs. Surrey's 88), 'love' (Vancouver has a rating of 100 vs. Surrey's 88), 'marriage' (Vancouver has a rating of 98 vs. Surrey's 90) and 'dating' (Vancouver has a rating of 100 vs. Surrey's 84)," Mayor Gregor Robertson's spokesman, Braeden Caley, wrote in an email to Metro.

Cynics rule

Metro asked online readers to finish this sentence: Valentine's Day is a ...

- Guilt-laden money grab by opportunistic companies (67%).
- Cute opportunity for romantic gestures (33%).

Robertson himself said via email the Valentine's disparity might exist because Vancouver is a romantic city every day of the year, not just on Feb. 14. For his part, the mayor plans to take his wife out for dinner.

"We've long been known as a city that celebrates love in all of its forms and expressions," he wrote. "Whether it's a new view for couples to share on every turn of the Seawall, or a vibrant new cultural or food experience in any one of Vancouver's 22 diverse neighbourhoods, there's always something special and unique on offer for every Vancouver Valentine."

Surrey Mayor Dianne Watts might have the best explanation for the Google gap between B.C.'s two largest cities.

"A third of our population is under the age of 19," she said, "so we've got a very young population, a lot of really young families, and I think Valentine's Day is just an opportunity to express how we feel about our family and kids and important families in our life."

KATE WEBB/METRO

A woman carries a bunch of balloons on Valentine's Day 2011 in San Francisco, Calif. If Google is to be believed, Vancouver's got nothing on Surrey when it comes to Valentine's anticipation. JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES FILE

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Childcare? Premier not sold on flat-fee system

B.C.'s government is promising to give provincewide childcare a boost, but the pledge comes hand-in-hand with the premier's criticism of another provincial daycare system that most closely resembles what advocates say is needed.

One day after the throne speech hinted at new measures to come, Premier Christy Clark said that by charging parents a flat $7 fee per day, Quebec's daycare system is far too expensive.

Lobbyists in B.C. have been campaigning for childcare at a rate of $10 per day.

"I think many Quebecers are recognizing that it's unaffordable to provide daycare at the same rate universally to people who are very, very wealthy as to people who are not so wealthy," she told reporters in Victoria on Wednesday.

But Clark went on to say childcare is an important issue for her and that more details of her government's upcoming plans will be revealed closer to the budget next Tuesday.

Advocates like Emily Mlieczko, executive director of the Early Childhood Educators of B.C., said Clark's response was typical under a system where, in her view, children's early years already get short-shrift.

"We understand that this will be a generational shift, that it will take time to implement a full plan," she said in an interview. "But we need a government to take the initiative to move forward and ... have a commitment to developing one."

The campaign for one flat fee has garnered the support of several organizations and thousands of families, including 3,000 who signed postcards encouraging the government to take a closer look.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH
THOSE WHO TAKE US AWAY
Abusive Policing and Failures in Protection of Indigenous Women and Girls in Northern British Columbia, Canada

Meghan Rhoad, women's rights researcher at Human Rights Watch, speaks during a press conference on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cop-abuse claims need followup: PM

Allegations of abuse. After Human Rights Watch alleges RCMP officers in B.C. abused aboriginal women, the PM says report it so police can investigate

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is calling on the group Human Rights Watch to share information with police about allegations of abuse by RCMP officers against aboriginal women in British Columbia.

Harper also announced that the government has asked the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP to look into the allegations raised in the report released Wednesday by the respected New York-based rights watchdog.

"If Human Rights Watch, the Liberal party or anyone else is aware of serious allegations involving criminal activity, they should give that information to the appropriate police so that they can investigate it," Harper told the House of Commons in response to a question by interim Liberal leader Bob Rae.

"Just get on and do it."

The report accuses RCMP officers of abusing aboriginal women and girls in northern B.C., including one allegation of rape.

The alleged incidents were uncovered as part of a broader investigation into charges of systemic neglect of missing and murdered aboriginal women along B.C.'s Highway 16, nicknamed the "Highway of Tears."

The Liberals and NDP joined the Assembly of First Nations in pushing the government to adopt the core recommendation of the report — that the federal and B.C. governments participate in a national commission of inquiry into the matter.

"We must make all efforts to ensure our citizens are protected, and that includes action by all parties — governments, police, citizens and families," said AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo.

"The stories shared in this report are heart-wrenching and absolutely appalling, particularly given this is only a small sample of the conditions and experiences of indigenous women, girls and families across our territories."

The RCMP wants to get to the bottom of abuse allegations against its officers, but Human Rights Watch isn't helping police to investigate, RCMP Chief Supt. Janice Armstrong said in a statement.

None of the complainants have come forward since the organization approached the Mounties about the allegations five months ago, so police haven't been able to investigate further, she said.

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Standards. Landlords say Vancouver database just the first step

Renters aren't the only ones pleased the spotlight is shining on the Vancouver's rental industry with the introduction of the city's online rental standards database.

"We think it's actually a really good idea," said Amy Spencer, president of the Rental Housing Council, an association that represents more than 3,000 rental housing owners, managers and associations in B.C.

The list educates tenants on bad buildings — about 300 have outstanding issues — but it also shows the majority of the 2,500 properties on the list are without issue.

"Not all landlords are bad," Spencer said.

But her association wants to go a step further and introduce a certified rental building program to the province.

"It would assure tenants that the building is run well and run by an ethical landlord," she said. "One of our goals is to bring professionalization to the industry."

The association is researching a similar rental program in Ontario to see how to implement it in B.C. It would certify apartments based on adherence to the tenancy act, the human-rights act and might even require that buildings meet green standards, Spencer said.

"There would be a whole binder of things that building and property managers would have to adhere to."

More than 30 per cent of British Columbians rent, and new rental construction and rental maintenance created 8,125 jobs and $439 million in wages in 2012, according to the association. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Accusations. Parties spar over ad spending

The first question period of the last legislative session before the spring election in B.C. amounted to a debate over which party was the more profligate spender in the race for voters' attention.

Opposition NDP Leader Adrian Dix, who earlier in the day named his deputy minister should he become premier, said Wednesday that leaked government documents show the Liberals will spend $16.4 million of taxpayers' money to promote the government's programs and next week's budget.

That's beyond even the NDP's earlier estimation of $15 million.

"The intent of the government is actually to ramp up this campaign ... through the end of March," Dix told the legislature.

"What is its purpose when you think of all the things that government is not supporting right now? The purpose of this campaign, according to the government document, is to help 'decrease the credibility gap of the government.'"

Quoted

"Apparently, what we have with the opposition is a case of: 'Don't do as we did. Do as we say.'"

Jobs Minister Pat Bell, accusing opposition NDP Leader Adrian Dix of hypocrisy

Dix repeated the NDP's demand that the government ban partisan advertising, especially in the run-up to the provincial election.

The NDP launched an online petition last month, claiming the ads are a "massive" waste of tax dollars, and he promised an NDP government would not run similar ads.

However, Jobs Minister Pat Bell accused Dix of hypocrisy, saying that when the NDP was last in power between 1993 and 2000, the party spent more money in each of those years than the $16.3 million the Liberals are planning to spend, including $28.4 million in the last year leading to the 2001 election.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

295 plants found

Abby police seize extra pot plants from sanctioned grow-op

Abbotsford police have seized 260 plants from a Health Canada-sanctioned grow-op that was licensed to grow 35.

The APD's drug-enforcement unit and emergency-response team went to a home in northwest Abbotsford Tuesday night where they found 295 marijuana plants.

After talking to a man on the property and Health Canada, investigators found that the property had a permit to grow 35 plants. Officers seized the extra 260 pot plants.

Police and fire crews were also called to a fire connected to an unrelated Health Canada-sanctioned grow-op that day.

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

B.C. Conservative Leader John Cummins holds a press conference Wednesday outside the Kitsilano Coast Guard base. Cummins released a personal letter he wrote to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, urging him to reconsider the impending closure of the Kits search-and-rescue station. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

PM, don't close the Kits Coast Guard base: Cummins

Personal letter. Tory leader hopes Harper will listen to concerns over future loss of life if search-and-rescue station is shut down

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
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The leader of the B.C. Tories says it's not too late for Prime Minister Stephen Harper to reverse the federal government's decision to close the Kitsilano Coast Guard base.

John Cummins, a former federal Conservative MP, has written a personal letter to Harper, urging him to intervene and keep the Kits search-and-rescue station open.

"Public services such as the Coast Guard should be the last thing on the list when you're trying to balance the books," he said at a press conference outside the base Wednesday.

Cummins hopes the prime minister will listen to a former colleague who agrees that lives will be lost once the busiest Coast Guard base in Canada closes.

"When you're sitting in Ottawa 3,000 miles from the coast here and you're listening to the senior bureaucrats at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the senior bureaucrats from the Coast Guard, you're really not going to get the picture," he said.

Emergency calls can't be "adequately addressed" by the Sea Island Coast Guard station in Richmond, Cummins added, and the money the federal government thinks it's going to save is not worth shutting down the Kits station.

"If there is a capsizing or a sinking of a vessel in the Vancouver Harbour area, you need quick response," he said. "People don't live long in the cold waters here. To say that a summertime service of student volunteers is adequate is simply false.

"If there is a problem out here and there is a loss of life, then I think that the (federal) government have to be held accountable," he added.

During the Vancouver Boat Show, members of the Jericho Sailing Centre Association collected 3,000 letters that will be sent to the prime minister. The group aims to get 10,000 the next three weeks.

Follow Phylicia Torrevillas on Twitter @ptorrevillas

Captain recalls fatal ferry sinking at trial

It wasn't the crash that woke up Colin Henthorne, the captain of the Queen of the North passenger ferry, but frantic banging on his cabin door as an unidentified crew member pleaded for him to come to the bridge.

He didn't find out the reason for the panic until he was already out of bed and almost dressed.

"Before I got my shoes on, the ship struck aground," Henthorne, who was fired by BC Ferries after the crash, testified Wednesday at the trial of one of his former crew members.

"I recognized immediately what it was. There was no mistaking that we were striking ground and continued to hammer along the rock."

The ferry struck Gil Island off British Columbia's northern coast.

The accused

Navigating officer Karl Lilgert pleaded not guilty to two counts of criminal negligence causing death.

- His trial is expected to last up to six months.

Navigating officer Karl Lilgert is on trial for criminal negligence causing the deaths of two passengers, who haven't been seen since the sinking on March 22, 2006.

Henthorne told the court he rushed to the wheelhouse, where alarms were blaring and officers were already taking their positions. He couldn't recall whether Lilgert was still on the bridge by that point.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

M&M'S® SPOKES CANDIES CALL IT QUITS!

Red and Yellow shock fans with resignation letter.

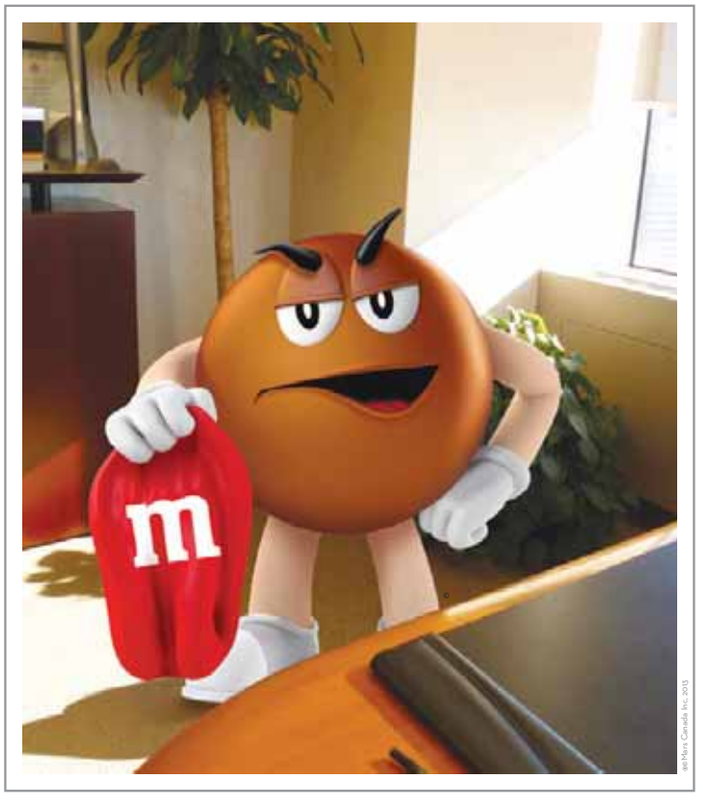
Milk chocolate lovers across the country today are mourning the loss of *M&M'S* iconic spokes candies Red and Yellow, following Tuesday's public announcement that they are hanging up their '*M*'s' and parting ways with the *M&M'S* team immediately to avoid being eaten.

"Those two have been with us for almost 60 years, so it came as a real shock" said *M&M'S* Chief Chocolate Officer Ms Brown, following the leak of Red and Yellow's resignation letter to the press on Friday. "But don't forget – the rest of us *M&M'S* spokes candies deal with the same problem everyday. Worse, I always get people smirking at me because they think I'm naked!" she continued.

The rant-filled resignation letter – which can be read in its entirety on facebook.com/mmscanada and on twitter @mmscanada – is quite abrasive and aggressive, complicating the possibility of any reconciliation. In their letter, the former spokes candies cite their daily fear of being eaten, among other things, as the main reason for resigning – going so far as to blame Canadians for their untamed love of milk chocolate.

Most *M&M'S* fans have been reacting to their departure with disappointment. "I loved Red and Yellow. You can't replace those two. It just won't be the same without them" says Craig Brandon, longtime *M&M'S* fan. Others are angry. "What the heck! This is how you thank your fans?" complains Jennifer Machey. And meanwhile, some people seemed confused. "Does this mean they're hiring? My grandson needs a summer job" said a man by the name of 'Bugsy'. As for the other *M&M'S* spokes candies – they wouldn't return our calls.

The departure of Red and Yellow as the mascots of the *M&M'S* brand has sparked speculation as to who will take over leading the corporate image. When asked if the company plans to promote from within or hire outside to fill the role of Red and Yellow, a company PR agent responded,



"I loved Red and Yellow. You can't replace those two. It just won't be the same without them."

Says Craig Brandon, longtime M&M's fan.

"You have to understand the position we're in now. Red and Yellow broke the mold. It's going to be very hard to fill their shoes, and that's not candy-coating it." Reactions on twitter have linked to leaked images of potential mascots sporting colours like Maroon and Sea Foam. The PR agent would not comment on the leaked images at this time.

Red and Yellow have since been spotted roaming around without their iconic '*M*' emblazoned candy shells on.

Perhaps it hasn't yet dawned on them that they are now naked. Whatever the case may be, one thing is for certain – the former *M&M'S* mascots have achieved celebrity status over the years and will surely be missed. Keep following this breaking news story as it unfolds at facebook.com/mmscanada and @mmscanada on twitter.

Climate group challenges Port Metro's input process

VTACC. Director wants Port Authority to hit rewind on both the Neptune and Fraser Surrey Docks coal-export approval processes

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

A climate group is questioning whether Port Metro Vancouver really listened to its neighbours before it green-lighted the Neptune Terminals coal export expansion.

Voters Taking Action on Climate Change (VTACC) obtained the more than 1,000 public comments the port received on the project and claims the port "misrepresented" comments on both sides.

About 375 people supported the project while more than 640 expressed concerns, according to the port's memo explaining why it approved the project.

While the port pointed out that the "vast majority" of those opposed to a coal-export expansion project sent form letters in the memo (59 per cent), it neglected to point out that 96 per cent of supporters sent form letters, too.

Kevin Washbrook, director of VTACC, said that all the comments are dated after his organization started a public-awareness campaign in November. That challenges the port's claim that they adequately informed the public, he said.

"If the Port Authority wants to restore public confidence and meet its goal of being a good neighbour to Metro Vancouver communities, it should hit rewind on both the Neptune and Fraser Surrey Docks coal-export approval processes and invite broad public participation in these decisions," Washbrook said in an email.

But the memo "fairly clearly" showed many of the comments were from form letters, said Greg Yeomans, the port's manager of planning.

"We did want to show that a number of calls on both sides of the fence were in form letters," he said. "We look at every kind of input we get, whether it's in the form of letters, council meetings, emails, whether they're form letters or not."

Public input is just one part of consideration in a review process that also includes significant work on the project's technical merits and an environmental review, he said. "We're always mindful to accurately reflect the input we receive."

File shot of tankers and freighters in Vancouver's harbour. An environmental group is questioning whether Port Metro Vancouver really listened to its neighbours before it green lighted the Neptune Terminals coal export expansion. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

B.C. Liberals hope to ride gas boom to election

Premier Christy Clark and Finance Minister Mike de Jong wait for Lt.-Gov. Judith Guichon to deliver a speech in legislature on Tuesday. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Critics of B.C. Premier Christy Clark say her election pitch involving a lucrative liquefied natural gas industry for the province is a "fantasy," but industry experts are siding with the premier.

Several experts within the natural gas industry said Wednesday Clark's LNG timelines and potential financial windfalls are on target despite projections ranging between seven years and 30 years.

The Opposition New Democrats say her trillion-dollar revenue forecasts highlighted in the government's throne speech appear based on fantasy and myth.

NDP finance critic Bruce Ralston said British Columbians should be wary of Clark's long-range LNG plan, given her government's poor record of hitting its recent revenue projection targets.

"The centrepiece of (Tuesday's) speech was the empty promise of a fantasy windfall of revenue up to 30 years away," he said.

Clark said in her government's throne speech the LNG export possibilities represent a possible $1 trillion boost to B.C.'s gross domestic product over the next 30 years.

Long-term plans

20

Whistler-based LNG expert Zoher Meratla said companies like Chevron, Shell and Mitsubishi, who are making plans to develop LNG-export terminals in northwest B.C., are making plans that extend beyond 20 years.

She announced a B.C. Prosperity Fund that will funnel between $130 billion and $260 billion in LNG royalties and taxes to the government. Clark said the fund will be used primarily to pay down the $56-billion debt, but she also mused about eliminating the sales tax.

The premier is refusing to elaborate on government plans to impose some form of royalty fee or tax on LNG fill the Prosperity Fund. She said the tax will keep B.C. competitive in the world LNG market, but also represents an opportunity to benefit the province. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chilliwack

Pair caught and charged after school break-in

A 32-year-old woman and a 34-year-old man face one count of break-and-enter after being caught allegedly breaking into the Tyson Elementary School on South Sumas Road in Chilliwack Sunday at around 4 a.m.

Mounties responded to the scene after getting reports of a possible break-and-enter and found two people at the back of the school breaking windows.

Police say the suspects fled and a short chase ensued. A police dog named Fritz apprehended the suspects without incident a short distance from the school.

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Most Wanted

Alleged thief picks wrong car to jack

B.C.'s top 10 most-wanted car thieves have been driven down to five. The integrated municipal provincial auto crime team says the five people on the list have been captured since Jan. 31.

Ian Gerald Mountain, who was No. 3, was arrested last Thursday in Surrey after being seen driving an allegedly stolen Dodge truck. Police say the man ran up to a stopped vehicle and banged on the passenger window. He tried to open the passenger door, unaware that it was an unmarked police car.

The 27-year-old was wanted for possession of stolen property and breach of probation and recognizance.

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Illegally in Canada

Sex assault on bus leads to deportation

A 49-year-old man has been deported to South Korea after being arrested on a Vancouver bus for sexual assault. Transit Police say it turned out the man had been in Canada illegally since 1995 and was wanted in Korea for financial crimes.

Seung Woo Min was arrested Feb. 4 after a commuter saw a man inappropriately touching women. When he was evasive about identifying himself, agents of the Canada Border Services Agency were called in. The agents determined Min was from South Korea, where he was wanted for fraud and embezzlement totalling close to $200,000.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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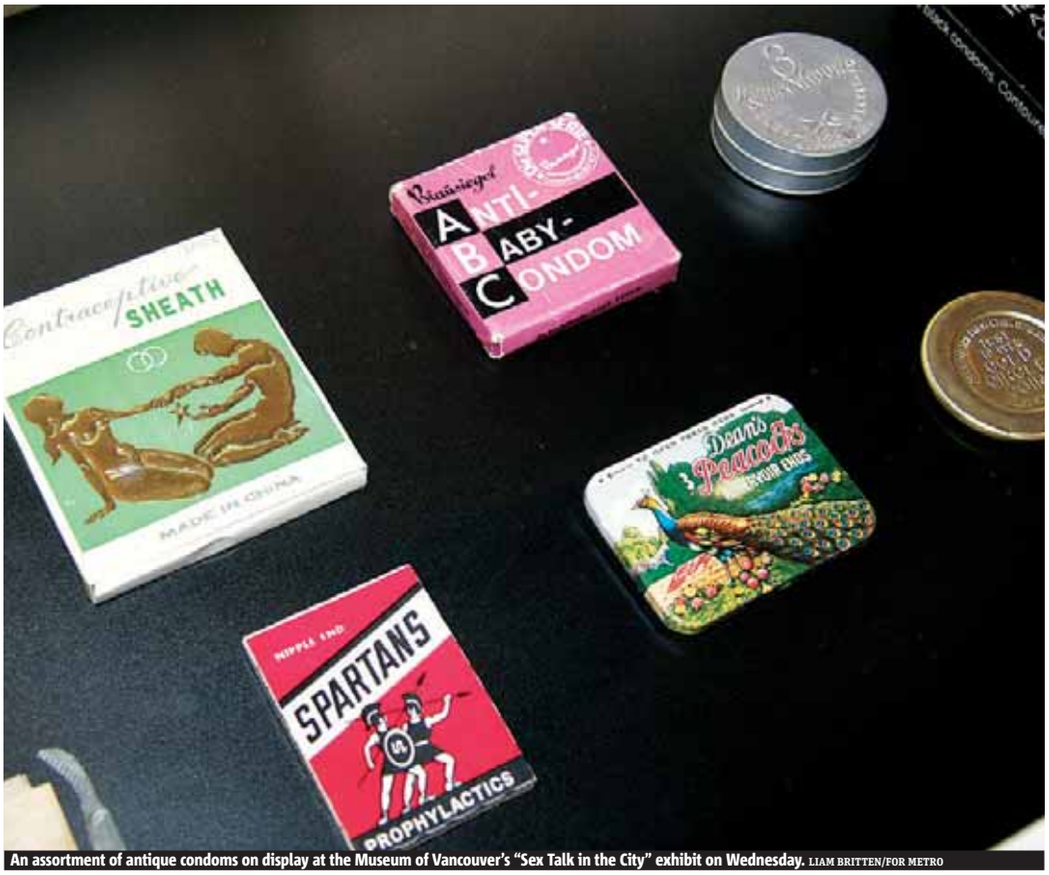

An assortment of antique condoms on display at the Museum of Vancouver's "Sex Talk in the City" exhibit on Wednesday. LIAM BRITTEN/FOR METRO

Pride, prudishness and prophylactics

'Sex Talk in the City.' Vancouver exhibit features antique condoms and vibrators dating all the way back to the 1880s

LIAM BRITTEN
vancouver@metronews.ca

More than the skyline has changed over the past 50 years, as a new exhibit at the Museum of Vancouver will attest.

"Sex Talk in the City" explores changing attitudes towards sex and sexuality in Vancouver. It chronicles how sex has become a less taboo topic over the years in the classroom, bedroom and out in the street.

Museum spokesperson Amanda McCuaig said curator Vivianne Gosselin wanted to make the exhibit authentic by giving viewers primary sources to see for themselves.

Visitors can have a look at vibrators dating back to the 1880s, when they were used to treat "female hysteria" — the Victorian term for a woman's sexual desire.

"There's pieces in the exhibit where you're looking at it and you think, 'I can't believe that was a thing,'" McCuaig said.

Sex education's evolution is also highlighted at the exhibit. Visitors can watch sex-education videos from the 1980s. There is also a copy of Asha's Mums, a book about growing up with lesbian parents that was banned by the Surrey school board until 2002

McCuaig said the museum hoped to start some conversations with "Sex Talk in the City."

"I think the value of people coming to see the exhibit is giving themselves that permission to think about it and talk about it with people they're involved with," McCuaig said. "There's a lot of opportunity here to look at things and laugh because… learning about sex can be so uncomfortable."

The exhibit runs Feb. 14 to Sept. 2.

Quoted

"There's pieces in the exhibit where you're looking at it and you think, 'I can't believe that was a thing.'"

Amanda McCuaig, Museum of Vancouver spokesperson

Langley police catch alleged Subway robber

Langley Mounties say they have nabbed a man responsible for nine robberies of Subways and other food joints throughout the city.

The crime spree took place between Feb. 2 and 8 at Edible Arrangements, various Subway locations and pizza places.

Police say the suspect wore a bandana, a baseball cap and a hoodie and used bear spray. In four occasions, the robber pepper sprayed people as he exited the establishments.

In one case, only $15 was taken, but the suspect made off with as much as $400 at another.

Mounties say covert surveillance units were set up on Feb. 8 in anticipation of another robbery. After a robbery at a Fresh Slice Pizza location in North Langley, police got a description of a suspect vehicle. Officers tracked the car at a nearby Esso gas station and arrested a man and a woman without incident.

Edward Joseph Biwer, 22, of Surrey, has been charged with nine counts each of robbery, assault with a weapon and disguise with intent. He has been remanded in custody until his court appearance Feb. 22.

His 31-year-old female accomplice, also from Surrey, has been released from custody and is scheduled to appear in court Feb. 26. Police are recommending robbery charges.

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HONDA

Just too much? New blog exposes troubling tweets

Female premiers face war of words. 'I think this kind of behaviour needs to be shamed,' says owner who hates hateful speech

LUKE SIMCOE
Metro Online

All part of the job? Premiers Kathleen Wynne, left, Alison Redford, Christy Clark and Pauline Marois face snide comments every day. METRO FILES

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne is "a lesbian tree hugger."

Quebec Premier Pauline Marois, "a dumb b—."

And depending on who you ask, B.C.'s Christy Clark needs to either button up her shirt or simply take it off.

These are the kinds of tweets, Facebook posts and comments you'll find collected at Madam Premier, a new blog dedicated to exposing the vitriol hurled at Canada's female first ministers.

"Their jobs are hard enough without having to be criticized on the basis of their gender," says the blog's owner, Diamond Isinger.

"If I wasn't already involved, this certainly wouldn't encourage me to enter into public life or electoral politics."

A resident of Vancouver and a self-described "policy wonk," Isinger started the blog Tuesday night. By Wednesday afternoon, nearly 3,000 people had visited.

The blog is part of a new "naming and shaming" tactic, where activists point fingers at those posting hateful speech online.

Last year, a Toronto feminist made headlines for identifying the man behind a violent and misogynistic video game. Shortly after, a Calgary man was fired from his job for mocking Amanda Todd on Facebook.

"Sunlight is the best disinfectant," Isinger says. "I think this kind of behaviour needs to be shamed."

A surprising number of comments — most of which are profane or sexual — appear to be posted under people's real names.

"It signals that we have a culture that's comfortable with this kind of thing. People feel they can say this stuff without repercussion," says Isinger.

York University's Dr. Jennifer Jenson says that by aggregating misogynistic comments, blogs like Madam Premier show that sexism is still a systemic problem.

"It's about compiling it so that it doesn't seem like it's just one guy doing this," she says. "When you see it this way, it's a literal documentation of the different kinds of people who feel compelled to say derogatory things about women in power."

Jenson says online comments made about female politicians often differ from those directed at men.

She says: "We never say 'Did you see the bulge in the Premier's pants?'"

MORE AT METRONEWS.CA

Climate change. Canada must follow Obama's call for action, envoy says

President Barack Obama's State of the Union message to act swiftly on climate change is a challenge to Ottawa as well, says the U.S. ambassador to Canada.

Obama used Tuesday's speech to present Congress with a choice: Either agree to market-based solutions to climate change, or else the president will use his executive powers to achieve the same result.

Ambassador David Jacobson said the message to move more aggressively against climate change was meant as much for Canada as it was for the United States.

"We all need to do as much as we can. And that is true in your country and in mine," Jacobson said.

"Obviously the more that the energy industry — whether it is the oil sands in Canada or the energy industry in the United States, or any place else — the more progress they can make to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to reduce their consumption of water, to other environmental consequences, the better off we all are."

Both Canada and the U.S. must move fast on climate change, says envoy David Jacobson. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

It was the signal many environmentalists in Canada have been waiting for.

"I see opportunity," said Megan Leslie, the NDP's outspoken environment critic.

"Canadians have not been well-represented by our government on action on climate change.

"Fortunately for Canadians, though, the Harper Conservatives will have little choice but to follow suit or risk our trading relationship with our biggest partner."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dead-ly force! Tories say they'll zap zombies

Will zombies ever take over Parliament Hill?

Never! Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird is on the case.

Baird assured the House of Commons that Canada remains a zombie-free zone.

The odd exchange came Wednesday near the end of the daily question period.

Winnipeg New Democrat Pat Martin raised the matter of a Quebec government disaster-planning exercise that used a mock zombie invasion as its premise.

B-movie templates of an invasion of the "living dead" have also been used for emergency preparedness drills in the United States.

"I don't need to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that zombies don't recognize borders," Martin warned the House, tongue planted firmly in cheek.

Is the foreign minister, asked the NDP MP, working with his American partners "to develop an international zombie strategy so that a zombie invasion does not turn into a zombie apocalypse?" Baird rose to the occasion with an equally glib response, telling the House that he was "dead-icated" to the matter.

"Under the leadership of this prime minister, Canada will never become a safe haven for zombies, ever," said Baird.

But he couldn't resist resurrecting an undead Tory talking point that has lurched through the parliamentary corridors for months: The NDP's fictional carbon tax, which a smiling Baird said would raise the cost of zombie-related emergency provisions — including monster trucks — for all Canadians.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird, pictured in the Commons Wednesday, says Canada will remain a zombie-free zone. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"I don't need to tell you ... zombies don't recognize borders."

Pat Martin,
New Democrat MP

Military crime

No severance pay for naval spy

Jeffrey Delisle, the naval officer who spied for the Russians, was stripped of his commission, his service decorations and kicked out of the military Wednesday.

National Defence said he will forfeit his severance pay. And the federal government will move to recover the salary paid to him since his arrest in January 2012.

Delisle's disclosure of secret information was intolerable and inexcusable, said Defence Minister Peter MacKay.

Delisle was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Driver's claim

Officer accused of sex toy threat

A police officer seen on video allegedly threatening to sexually assault a tow-truck driver with two pink sex toys should be fired, the man says.

Jagdis (Mike) Tirbany said he was distressed that criminal charges against the officer had been dropped.

Tirbany, a married father of three, alleged he was threatened with being sodomized.

Tirbany, 46, of Toronto, said the incident occurred inside a Ontario Provincial Police detachment where he had gone last March for fingerprinting in light of an assault charge he was facing.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Billboard study

Can these words cause a crash?

A University of Alberta researcher wants to put the brakes on billboards with negative words.

Michelle Chan put fellow students into a driving simulator and tested their skills behind the wheel.

The test asked subjects to drive down a computer-generated road as ads appeared with negative, positive and neutral words.

Words such as cancer, war and abuse caused most of the drivers to veer outside their lane. Some drivers crashed into trees, other vehicles and pedestrians.

"Billboards are already distracting enough," said Chan. "But then when you add the negative emotional content, it … can be detrimental to driving."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Offer(s) available on select new 2013 models through participating dealers to qualified retail customers who take delivery by February 28, 2013. Dealers may sell or lease for less. Some conditions apply. See dealer for complete details. Vehicles shown may include optional accessories and upgrades available at extra cost. All offers are subject to change without notice. All pricing includes delivery and destination fees (up to $1,650), $34 tire recycling/filter charges, $1.0HVIC tax, environmental fee and $100 A/C charge (where applicable) and excludes licencing, registration, insurance, other taxes, variable dealer administration fees (up to $399) and down payment (if applicable and unless otherwise specified). Other lease and financing options also available. ††5% purchase financing is available on select new 2013 Kia models O.A.C. Terms vary by model and trim, see dealer for complete details. Representative financing example based on 2013 Sorento LX + AT (SR75B) with a selling price of $29,618 financed at 0% APR for 60 months. 60 bi-weekly payments equal $224 per payment with a down payment/equivalent trade of $0. ††† Payments On Us offer is available on approved credit to eligible retail customers who finance or lease any new 2013 Sorento from a participating dealer between February 1–28, 2013. Customers will receive a cheque in the amount of three payments (excluding taxes) to a maximum of $850 per month or can choose up to $1,650 reductions from the selling/lease price after taxes. See your dealer for complete details. Offer ends February 28, 2013. Cannot be combined with "Don't Pay for 90 Days" offer. ^^"Don't Pay for 90 Days" offer (90-day payment deferral) applies to purchase financing on select new 2012/2013 models. No interest will accrue during the first 90 days of the finance contract. After 90 days, interest accrues and the purchaser will repay both the principal and interest monthly over the contract's term. ^90 weekly finance payment O.A.C. Ex new 2013 Sorento LX AT FWD (SR75BD) based on a selling price of $29,078 ex $599 with an APR of 1.49% for 60 months, amortized over an 84-month period with a $0 down payment or equivalent trade. Estimated remaining principal balance of $8,171 plus applicable taxes due at end of 60-month period. Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. ^Lease offer available on approved credit on new 2013 Sportage 2.4L LX AT (SP75CB) is based on monthly payments of $213 (includes lease savings, lease credit) of $3000 for 48 months at 1.9% with a $3,000 down payment/equivalent trade, security deposit and first monthly payment due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $14,810 with the option to purchase at the end of the term for $10,848. Lease has 16,000 km/year allowance and $0.12/km for excess kilometres (other packages available). License, insurance, applicable taxes and registration fees are extra. Retailer may lease for less. See dealer for full details. *Cash purchase price for 2013 Optima LX MT (PA541D) is $19,083 and includes a cash savings of $4,000 (which is deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes and cannot be combined with special lease and finance offers). Retailer may sell for less. †$4,000 cash savings on the cash purchase of an eligible new 2013 Optima LX MT (PA541D) from a participating dealer between February 1–28, 2013. Cash savings is deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes and cannot be combined with special lease and finance offers. Some conditions apply. The 2013 Kia Optima is the 17th annual winner of the COTY as presented by Ross & Travel Magazine†. ‡Model shown Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price for 2013 Sorento 3.5L SX AWD 7-seater (SR75DD) / 2013 Sportage 2.0T SX with Navigation (SP75BD) / 2013 Optima SX Turbo A/T (OP781D) is $43,245/$36,550/$42,795 and includes delivery and destination fees of $1,650/$1,650/$1,495, environmental fee and A/C charge ($100, where applicable). License, insurance, applicable taxes, variable dealer administration fees (up to $399), tire recycling and filter charges of $34, OMVIC fee and registration fees are extra. Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. Available at participating dealers. ^

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KEYS TO E-DATING SUCCESS: HOW TO SHINE ONLINE

If you do decide to find romance on the net, keep these tips in mind to create a winning dating-site profile

Relationship. Establish the type of relationship you are looking for. Are you looking for a fling, casual dating or a potential long-term relationship? After you establish a clear goal, it will be easier to find an online dating service that suits your needs.

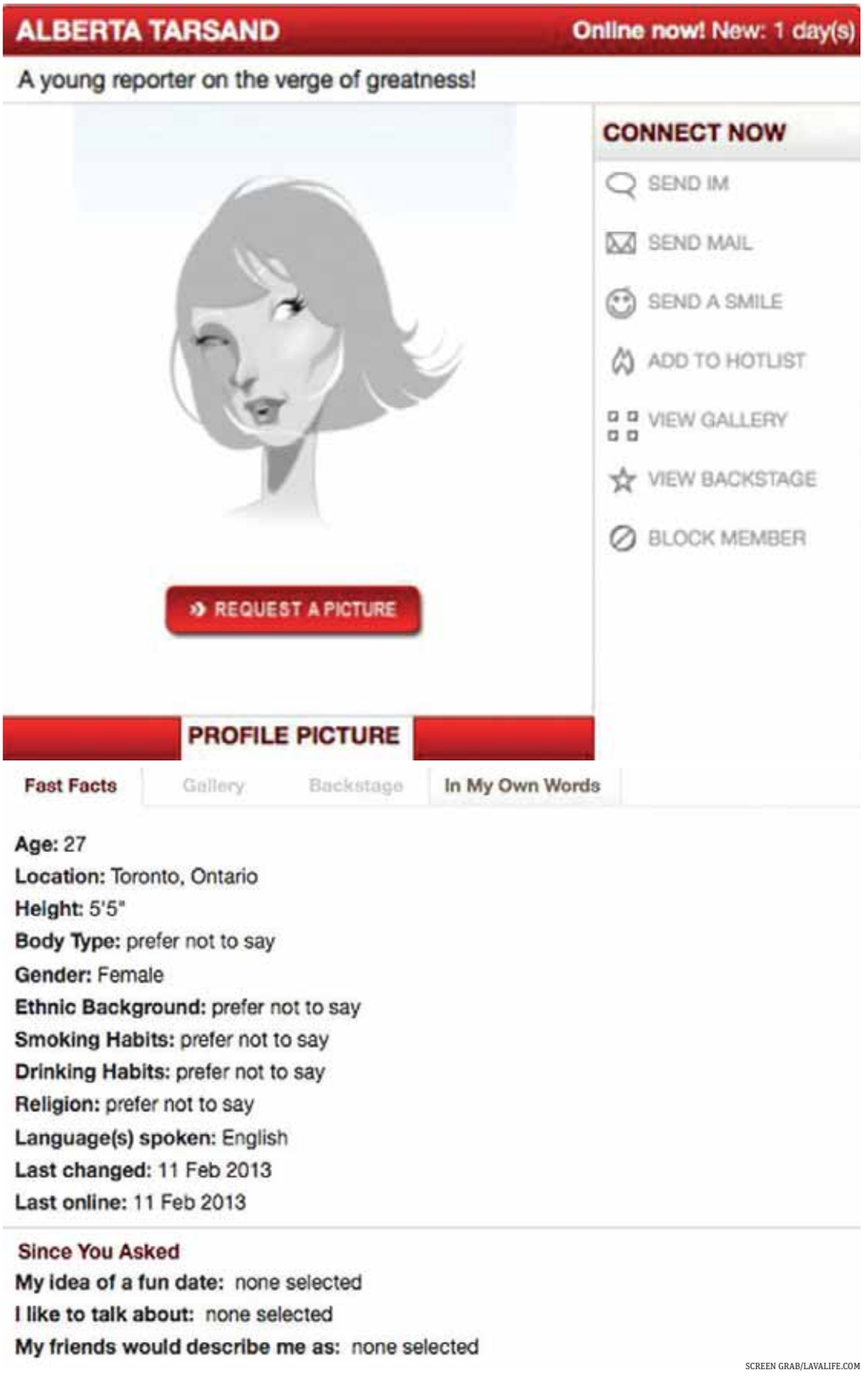
Profile name. Depending on the type of online-dating website you sign up for, your username should indicate you are serious about meeting people. Avoid names with numbers or "xx." Just your first name should suffice if you are wary about using your full name.

Profile photo. Pick a recent photo that shows your true self (not super drunk, not dressed for the clubs and no bikini shots). The most important part is to look confident and happy without trying too hard, and you will attract positive suitors.

Personal facts. Be honest in your profile, especially when it comes to age, body type, whether you smoke or drink and whether you have kids. You wouldn't want the people you meet online to lie about who they are, right?

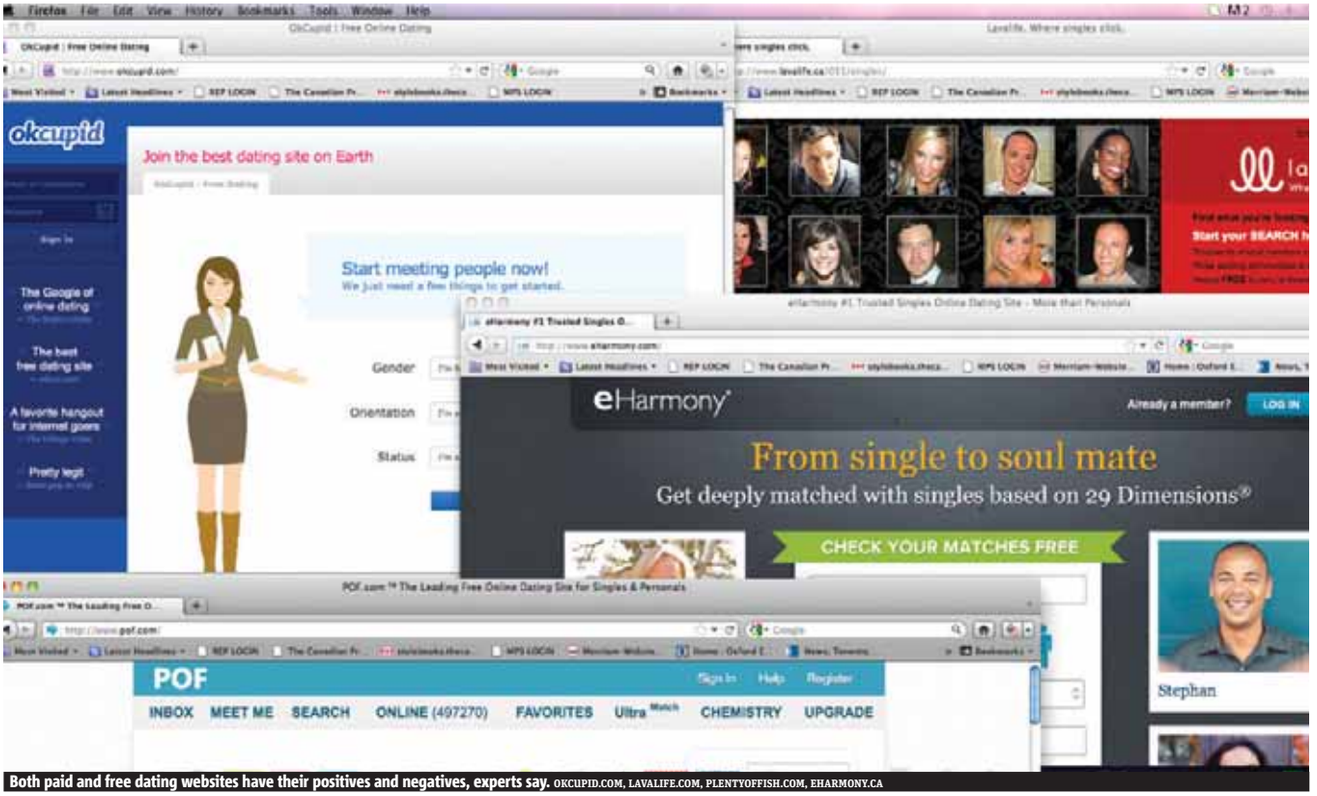
About me. Your description should be brief, but make it stand out. Try not to sound too clichéd but do take this part of the profile to talk about who you are and why you're trying online dating. Are you too busy with work to go out to the clubs every weekend but are looking to meet someone worth your time?

Interests. Describe your idea of a perfect first date, as this will give an indication of what you like to do for fun. Describe something that sounds engaging and interactive, such as hanging out in a board-game café or playing a round of miniature golf.



LAURIE CALLSEN/METRO IN EDMONTON

SCREEN GRAB/LAVALIFE.COM



Both paid and free dating websites have their positives and negatives, experts say. OKCUPID.COM, LAVALIFE.COM, PLENTYOFFISH.COM, EHARMONY.CA

Should you pay to play the dating game?

Where to go. Paid and free sites tend to attract different types of clients with different sets of priorities, experts say

RYAN TUMILTY
Metro in Edmonton

When preparing to jump into the online-dating universe, is it better to jump in with just your heart or with your wallet as well?

As dating sites have cropped up, some have opened their doors to members free of charge, while others have monthly subscriptions for those looking for love.

Kimberly Moffit, Match.com's relationship insider, argues that paid sites are there for more committed individuals who are interested in serious relationships.

"It just distinguishes the people who are willing to put the investment in and those who aren't," said Moffit. "They are ready to make an investment in their love life."

Moffit argues that any online dating is a good thing, but people on paid sites are more likely to be taking their search seriously.

"They are more likely looking for some of the same things you are," she said.

Quoted

"(Paying for a site) just distinguishes the people who are willing to put the investment in and those who aren't." Kimberly Moffit, Match.com's relationship insider

Christine Hart, a Toronto-based dating coach, said both types of sites have advantages, but free sites tend to attract a different type of prospective dater.

"If they are going to go on the free sites, then they need to be prepared to put in a lot more time sifting through, because the free sites attract people with all levels of goals," she said.

Part of the benefit of paid dating sites is that they attract fewer people, she added.

"You can spend twice as much time sifting through profiles on the free dating sites," she said.

Julie Spira, author of the book The Perils of Cyber-Dating, said she and her clients see benefits to both types of sites.

"It is very common for someone to pick a paid site, and then they will also pick a free site."

She said free sites attract huge numbers of people, which can be appealing simply for the sheer quantity of prospective partners.

"Because they are free ... they have huge critical mass," she said.

Spira said clients who pay for a dating site tend to pay more attention to the service.

"I find that a lot of them log into their paid sites more often because they are invested," she said.

Exclusively online

For all our stories on online dating, including infographics, video and more, go to metronews.ca

Part 3 of 3

TUESDAY
Is traditional dating dead?

YESTERDAY
The rise of the e-dating jungle

TODAY
E-dating success: How to shine online

Stay safe. Don't let your heart get you in trouble online: Cops

While the online-dating world is full of opportunities, it can also be full of perils.

Police have noticed that the excitement that comes with online romance can attract the wrong type of people — those who may cause physical or financial harm.

Acting Sgt. Kathy Macdonald with the Calgary Police Service said new relationships sometimes prevent people from seeing the bigger picture.

"When people get wrapped up in a relationship, they can't see what's going on," she said.

Macdonald said fraud artists using dating sites can go after many potential victims in just one day.

"They will often get a hold of a lot of people at the same time," she said.

According to Macdonald, scam artists often approach someone and strike up a conversation before claiming to have run into sudden and unexplained financial difficulties.

She said if they receive money from their victims, new problems will emerge, and there will be more requests for help.

Macdonald said there could also be physical dangers and she cautions people to take things slowly in the early days of a new relationship.

"Listen to your intuition and be aware of your surroundings," she advised.

Macdonald said making the first date a group meeting is a good idea, but it's essential that it be in a public place and that you tell people where you're going.

"Really, you don't know that person; you don't know who is going to show up."

RYAN TUMILTY/METRO IN EDMONTON

E-Bytes: Five free iPhone apps for tech-savvy couples

- **Couple App.** Couple is like Facebook, but it can only be shared by two people. You can send messages, chat via Facetime, share photos and video, create moments via doodles and track important dates and tasks. There's also a "Thinking of you" button when that's all you want to say.

- **Avocado App.** Like Couple, Avocado is shared with only one special person. You can send private messages, track milestones together and share them on Twitter as a pair and even send virtual hugs and kisses so you're never too far away from your sweetheart.

- **Tokii App.** Tokii helps you get in touch with your partner's feelings. You can send each other notes starting with "I feel" or "You're making me feel." The app aims to keep couples engaged and aware of one another's moods by providing interactive games and relationship advice, which can take your relationship to the next level.

- **Wunderlist 2.** Although not exclusively for couples, nothing is more annoying than your partner forgetting to pick up the dry-cleaning or something at the grocery store. Wunderlist 2 helps couples plan, share and keep track of tasks and even plan vacations together. It's able to sync the lists across all the devices you are using.

- **Between App.** Between is a private-messaging space that lets you and your partner create a chronological timeline tracking the special moments in your relationship. You can bookmark your favourite memories, such as photos and messages, and store them in a Memory Box, as well as find date-night deals via the Event Box.

New Maritime cell challenger on scene

Halifax. Eastlink first to offer 4G LTE network

ALY THOMSON
For Metro in Halifax

A Halifax communications company is now competing with some of Canada's wireless giants.

Eastlink, owned by Bragg Communications Inc., is offering cellphones to Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island on a no-term contract basis.

Matthew MacLellan, president of Eastlink's wireless division, said the new service would include Canada's first and only 4G LTE network.

"You've got competitors of ours based out of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver," MacLellan told a crowd on Wednesday at the Eastlink store in downtown Halifax. "We think we can do it from Halifax and we think we can do it just as well and better.

"Why should you have to go to your cottage and have to stand up on the roof to try and get a cell signal?"

Existing Eastlink customers can opt to bundle a cellphone with their Internet, television or home phone to save between 10 and 20 per cent.

"We're trying to build this from a customer perspective," MacLellan said. "We really tried to listen to everything that customers said that they liked about cellphones and cellphone companies and the things they didn't like."

He said the company has added between 100 and 120 new jobs to support its wireless division. It has also beefed up customer service and technical support, he said.

Eastlink Wireless president Matthew MacLellan JEFF HARPER/METRO IN HALIFAX

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Watchdog. Retailers misled on card payments

Some credit and debit card payment companies are breaking rules created to protect retailers, which in turn could be costing Canadians more money, a federal consumer watchdog says.

The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada issued a warning to the industry on Wednesday that it will not tolerate payment companies who mislead merchants into paying hidden fees or lock them into confusing contracts.

The concerns stem from a code of conduct introduced by the federal government nearly three years ago to encourage further clarity in the contracts signed between retailers and credit and debit card companies.

But the agency said it found some payment companies, who it did not name, have been misrepresenting the terms of contracts with merchants by advertising and promising rates that they were unable to honour.

"This guidance is meant to address these issues by providing better disclosure to merchants and eliminating inappropriate sales and business practices that result in increased costs for merchants, and consequently for consumers as well," commissioner Ursula Menke said in a release.

The agency said its investigation found that some merchants signed agreements that they later discovered were linked to additional contracts that had different cancellation clauses, penalty fees or costs associated with them.

While the merchant was able to cancel the agreement without penalty, the agency said they were still locked into paying additional fees to cancel the other contracts. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Brazilian patent office

Local company has rights to 'iPhone'

Brazil's patent authority has taken a bite out of Apple with an announcement Wednesday that the iPhone name in Brazil belongs to a local company called Gradiente SA, not to the global computer giant.

The verdict doesn't forbid Apple from using the name in Brazil.

Gradiente had filed its request to use the iPhone brand in 2000. Their request to use the iphone trademark was granted in 2008. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Frozen lasagna

Horsemeat reaches Germany

The European horsemeat scandal has spread to Germany. A spokeswoman for the country's agriculture and consumer protection ministry says officials were notified Tuesday that a shipment of frozen lasagna containing horsemeat was delivered to at least one trader in western Germany.

Millions of burgers and frozen meals have been recalled across Europe since the discovery of mislabelled horsemeat last month. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 99.82¢ (+0.09¢)

TSX 12,775.28 (-13.74)

OIL $97.01 US (-$0.50)

GOLD $1,645.10 (-$4.50)

Natural gas: $3.31 (+8¢))
Dow Jones: 13,982.91 (-35.79)

A WRITTEN HISTORY OF ST. VALENTINE

HE SAYS...
John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

One little known fact about me (along with every other fact) is that I am a Valentine's Day history buff. This is why so many women I've spent Valentine's Day with have told me, "You're history." Their words, not mine.

It's a fascinating topic.

By looking back at the origins of Valentine's Day we can see how it overcame its humble beginnings as a 14th-century Coca-Cola promotion to become the genuine and understated holiday we know and love today, giving birth to some of the great poetry and art of our time.

The history of Valentine's Day: From mass decapitation to mass duplication:

Ralph Wiggum syndrome

With its perfect pre-Hollywood combo of romance and violence, Valentine's Day became increasingly popular. The biggest breakthrough came in 1584 when journeyman poet William Shakespeare wrote "Bee my Valentine" next to a picture of a bee.

Our story begins in **the 300s**, when mid-February was called **Lupercalia**, which was a celebration of **Juno**, the goddess of Canadian music awards. The festivities were boisterous but primitive, with people forced to express their love through **cards** they had to construct from scratch and **poetry** they had to write for themselves. It's hard to imagine the hardship.

This was before the invention of either **scissors or Shakespeare**, which meant the results were often little more than pieces of wood with **dirty drawings** on them, leading to many extinguished loves and several brutal wars. All was fair in both cases, and nobody ever had to say they were sorry.

The dismal state of **affairs** (most of the cards ended with the clunky "Be My Lupercalia") eventually changed with the birth of three different men named **Valentine**, a glorified soul considered so important to God that He built in **double-redundancy**. The three saints Valentine were very different people, but they all shared one romantic trait: They were all **brutally executed**.

This, of course, dovetails nicely with our perception of **modern love**. Since their beheadings, the most **perfect loves** in fiction have always ended in **death** (Romeo and Juliet, Rose and Jack, Teen Angel and Narrator) leaving many husbands and wives to wish **their romances** could end so perfectly.

A number of legends have grown around the executions of St. Valentine(s), **not all of them true**, but it's clear their deaths gave rise to several famous **romance-related phrases**.

For instance, it's well documented that the **Grand Executioner** began each decapitation with the solemn proclamation: "It's not you, it's me."

Also, each saint's head tended to fall on his **twitching feet**, leading to the well-known phrase, "head over heels." ("To wear your heart on your sleeve" also came about then, but it's best not to get into details.)

With its perfect pre-Hollywood combo of **romance and violence**, Valentine's Day became increasingly popular. The biggest breakthrough came in 1584 when journeyman poet **William Shakespeare** wrote "Bee my Valentine" next to a picture of a bee. This brilliant bit of wordplay took off on Reddit, leading to fame and fortune for Shakespeare, despite claims of copyright infringement by user **Francis_Bacon**.

Combined with the invention of the **Gutenberg Laserjet Printer**, spreading love around the world was soon as simple as plunking down $8.95. By 2012, for the first time ever the **illness that is love** could spread worldwide just as quickly as **love-related illnesses**.

The **poets of the past** would be uncharacteristically speechless if they could see how easy sharing the perfect words has become. Though I think if Shakespeare were here today, he'd probably say, "What a time to **bee** alive. Or if not alive, to buzz off."

I'd **love** to see him top that.

... and they call it guppy love

CLELIA GASPARINI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Advice from a guppy

Choose an ugly wingman to make yourself shine

When it comes to mating, guppies treasure their ugly friends — because they look so good by comparison.

An article published Wednesday by Britain's Royal Society says that male guppies prefer to associate with their drab-coloured counterparts when females are around.

"Males actively choose the social context that maximizes their relative attractiveness," the article said. Or, as lead author Clelia Gasparini put it: "If you are surrounded by ugly friends, you look better."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The dating game

- **Mating rituals.** An aquarium was set up with one female in partition on either end. Guppy bachelorette No. 1 had two attractive, brightly coloured males placed on either side of her. Guppy bachelorette No. 2 was stuck with uglier, drab-coloured fish.
- **The ugly guppy.** When a male guppy was put in the middle of the tank, and given the choice of which female to approach, bachelorette No. 2 was the more popular pick, with male guppies spending about 62 per cent of their time hanging around her side of the aquarium.

Plenty of fish

Ugly guppy plays matchmaker

The researchers also found that the time guppies spent with the guppy that was surrounded by ugly fish correlated with their unattractiveness. The uglier the guppy, the less likely it was that he would hang around the brightly coloured fish placed next to bachelorette No. 1.

Because it could be argued that guppies avoided their brightly coloured pals because attractive fish were more aggressive, or because predators were more likely to spot them, the experiment was repeated. Researchers ran it without any females, and again with the lights in the male enclosures turned down so that the test guppies couldn't see them.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Only human

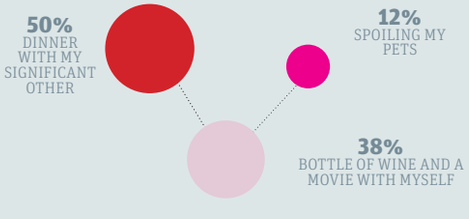
"As a researcher I cannot compare human mating systems with the guppies' one. But if you ask me as a person, sure ... I saw this tactic working pretty well with humans ... If you want to impress someone, do you think you will look more attractive in comparison with Mr. Bean or George Clooney?"

Clelia Gasparini, lead author of article published by Britain's Royal Society

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

How will you be spending Valentine's Day?



Twitter

@mbround: Watching a pair of eagles drive off a mob of seagulls from my lab desk. I live and work in a nice place. #gradschool #Vancouver #UBC

@dominanttritone: I have a running list of reasons why I'm disenchanted with Vancouver.

@RemyScalza: Thanks for the RTs! Late-Night Street Food Fest (with beer) coming to #Vancouver, Feb 22-23 http://owl.li/hELUc @EdibleCanada

@stayingLEVEL: Reason # 85468 why we love Vancouver: you'll never go hungry because there's always a food festival! DumplingFest start February 15th...

@VanCanucks: #Canucks win their sixth straight game, buck Wild 2-1 thanks to 25 saves from Bobby LUUUUUU. http://bit.ly/VRVKn6 #CanucksG12

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Illustration: Thomas Pitilli

YOU COULD WIN A CONCERT DATE WITH BIEBER!

THIS VALENTINE'S DAY – METRO "BELIEBES" IN LOVE!

Metro is inviting one lucky winner to a VIP experience at a Justin Bieber concert. You could win airfare, hotel and concert tickets for two with backstage passes to meet Bieber himself on one of his European Tour stops. All you have to do is:

1. Take a photo of yourself with this ad in a place you'd take Justin on a date
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3. Remember to share the love! Collect votes from your friends to increase your chances of landing the grand prize!

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No purchase necessary. Contest open to residents of Canada and certain other countries worldwide who are thirteen (13) years of age or older. Odds of winning depend on the number and caliber of eligible entries received. One (1) Grand Prize is available to be won, consisting of a trip to see Justin Bieber perform and meet Justin Beiber (approximate retail value of $5,000 CAD). Skill testing question required. Contest closes February 28, 2013 at 12:00AM CET. To enter and for complete contest rules visit www.facebook.com/metroint. Contest sponsors are Metro International S.A. together with its local Metro subsidiaries around the globe. The contest is in no way sponsored by Free Daily News Group Inc. or Pizza Pizza Limited. Neither Free Daily News Group Inc. nor Pizza Pizza Limited is responsible for this contest or its prize(s).

One lucky reader will meet Justin Bieber backstage at a future show through Metro's Valentine's Day contest. CONTRIBUTED

Beliebe in love!

Justin Bieber. Enter our Valentine's Day contest for a chance to meet the superstar

MICHAEL FREIDSON
Metro World News

Metro's Justin Bieber contest gives you the once in a lifetime opportunity to meet him backstage at a future show. Alas, we were not so lucky, but the superstar did answer some questions about his new album, Believe Acoustic, via email, shortly before heading out on his European tour.

On Believe Acoustic, you sound more raw and more available than on previous big-production tracks. How do you make that intimacy sound authentic, even though you're ...

Justin Bieber?
It sounds authentic because it is. Acoustic performances, whether busking in my hometown or on YouTube, are how I got started. Songs and performances like that really give me the chance to connect with my fans. That connection is why I perform an acoustic set as part of my Believe Tour every night.

Does this bring us closer to the "real" Justin?
I think everything I put out is a representation of the real me. But this album (Believe Acoustic) definitely allows the public to see a different side of me than Believe. The sound of this album is a lot rawer and more exposed.

I ask because previous stars your age — Timberlake, Britney — usually start to define their sound for an older audience around this time. Where are you going?

Quoted

"I'm just growing up and my sound is maturing with me. I just write about what is going on in my life."
Justin Bieber, on his new album Believe Acoustic

I'm just growing up and my sound is maturing with me. I don't spend a lot of time planning where my music will go next. I just write about what is going on in my life and how I am feeling and it's causing the music to grow with me in a very organic way.

Lots of guys in dorm rooms everywhere play acoustic guitars to pick up girls and fail, because they look cheesy. What tips do you have for them?
Be confident.

What are you doing this Valentine's Day?
I've got a small break before my U.K. tour dates start so I'm still figuring it out.

What's the wildest offer you've had from a fan?
I get a lot of marriage proposals.

We have to ask about Nothing Like Us, a song about your break up with Selena Gomez — you told Billboard you're not in the happiest place and have friends to get you through. What have you learned about relationships?
I have learned a lot about who I am and who I want to be.

And?
I've also learned how to be there for someone else.

Bieber's V-Day Playlist

Justin creates his ultimate romantic mixed tape — fire up the iTunes and turn down the lights!

- **I'll Make Love To You.** Boyz II Men
- **As Long As You Love Me.** Justin Bieber
- **You Are Not Alone.** Michael Jackson
- **7 Days.** Craig David
- **Back at One.** Brian McKnight
- **Climax.** Usher
- **Because of You.** Ne-Yo
- **Let's Get it On.** Marvin Gaye
- **Best I Ever Had.** Drake
- **Broken Road.** Rascall Flatts

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Romance

Safe Haven

Director. Lasse Hallstrom

Stars. Josh Duhamel, Julianne Hough

Josh Duhamel and Julianne Hough are blandly likeable enough but this seventh big-screen adaptation of a Nicholas-Sparks-authored heart flutterer won't find a safe haven from discerning audiences. Simply put, this tale is about a woman seeking sanctuary in a sleepy town who falls for a widower while her psychotic hubby hunts her down. Veteran filmmaker Lasse Hallstrom (Dear John) does his best to mould the melodrama but Safe Haven is still mostly stale and unmistakably safe storytelling.

STEVE GOW

Romance/Drama

Beautiful Creatures

Director. Richard LaGravenese

Stars. Alice Englert, Alden Ehrenreich

Based on a series of young adult novels, Beautiful Creatures is likely aimed at the same cinematic spend-thrift crowd that turned the Twilight franchise into box-office alchemy. Adapting the love story between a longing, teenaged bookworm and his supernatural girlfriend with a curse, Oscar-nominated-filmmaker Richard LaGravenese (The Fisher King) clutters an ultimately simplistic story with complications that are neither all that compulsory nor compelling. It ends up anything but super or natural. **STEVE GOW**

Action

A Good Day To Die Hard

Director. John Moore

Stars. Bruce Willis, Jai Courtney, Sebastian Koch

The original Die Hard is an '80s classic. A near perfect mix of action, humour and Bruce Willis' charisma, it was a claustrophobic thriller set inside an office building. Since then the movies have slowly opened up the action, becoming more generic with every added location. The new film sees Willis in Russia joining forces with his CIA operative son (Jai Courtney). It has exotic locations and a body count that would take a mathematician to calculate, but none of the wit or style of the first film.

RICHARD CROUSE

JOHN MCCLANE'S BODY COUNT

We chart the number of bad guys Bruce Willis has dispatched over the four Die Hard films — and see what the data might tell us about how he'll do in the fifth instalment, A Good Day to Die Hard.

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- Pete Hammond, MOVIELINE

"JOSH & JULIANNE HAVE GREAT ONSCREEN CHEMISTRY TOGETHER."
- Ben Lyons, EXTRA

"A CAPTIVATING STORY OF THE POWER OF LOVE AND SECOND CHANCES."
- Whitney English, SHEKNOWS.COM

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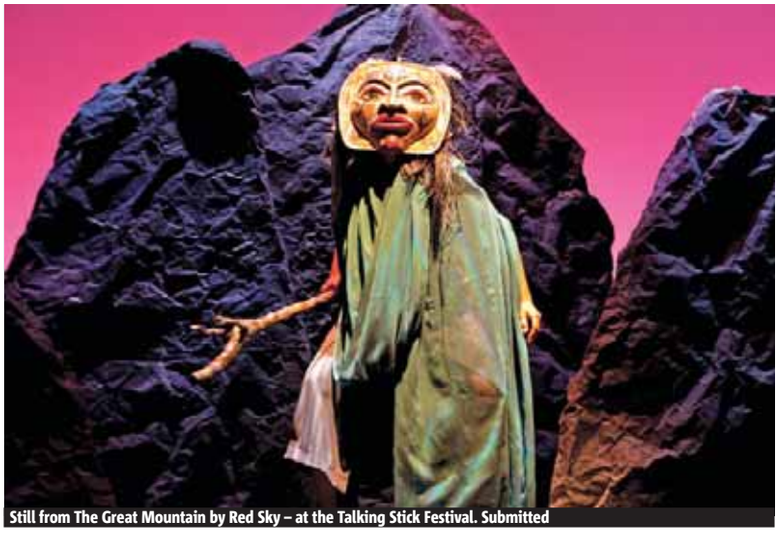
A pair of February fests to help you stick it to winter



Still from The Great Mountain by Red Sky – at the Talking Stick Festival. Submitted

Winter blahs no more. Let Winteruption and Talking Stick lift your spirit out of the cold weather doldrums

BACKSTAGE PASS
Graeme McRanor
vancouver@metronews.ca

Is February getting you down?

Are you yearning for some warm weather?

Are you still mad that Justin Bieber didn't get a single Grammy nomination?

If you answered "yes" to the first two questions, I've got some good news: spring is just around the corner. If you want proof just look at your calendar. The corner being March. And there's spring right after it.

Do you see it?

No matter. In the nearer future, we've got the eighth annual installment of Winteruption, an abbreviated winter festival that takes place next weekend on Granville Island.

There's music (Sex Mob Plays Fellini — The Music of Nino Rota), theatre (Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat), food (Sustainable Seafood Walking Tour), Kids stuff (Duh Hockey Gus), and more.

Check it out Feb. 22-24. More information at GranvilleIsland.com.

Also, next week is the Talking Stick Festival, an exploration of the artistic wealth of Aboriginal people and their traditions in contemporary form.

She's so excited

"I am excited to continue to feature voices from across Canada that promise to bring stories of our people to share with us all."

Talking Stick Festival artistic director Margo Kane

This year's festival features three programming streams: the Headliner Series, which includes music, dance and theatre (A Circumpolar Soundscape, Lara Kramer, Agokwe).

Check out Sagkeeng's Finest, touted as Canada's own Lords of the Dance. The teenaged trio, consisting of Dallas and Brandon Courchene and Vince O'Laney, blends First Nations clogging with contemporary dance and took home the top prize on Citytv's short-lived Canada's Got Talent.

There's also the Development Series, which focuses on storytelling and other performances for family and young audiences; and the Festival Plus Series, which features slams poetry and multimedia performances.

The Talking Stick Festival runs from Feb. 19 to Mar. 3 at various venues throughout the Vancouver. Tickets range from $12-25; opening night gala: $40. There are also some Pay-What-You-Can performances. For more information visit FullCirclePerformance.ca.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Hugh Jackman: Nope, not gay

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

Just because he has a deep love of musical theatre, lives in the West Village and has an older wife does not make Hugh Jackman gay. In an in-depth interview with The Hollywood Reporter, the Australian star addresses the gay rumours that constantly swirl around him.

"Just recently, it bugs her," Jackman, 44, said about what his wife of 16 years, Deborra-Lee Furness, 57, reads online."She goes: 'It's big. It's everywhere!'"

His X-Men producer Lauren Shuler Donner even went on record with the magazine to talk about their marriage. "I have seen him with Deborra since the beginning of their trip to Hollywood, and I've been on five movie sets with him and have never seen him stray, have never seen him eye anyone," she said. "I met him when he did Oklahoma! (at London's Royal National Theatre in 1999). He was genuine, hugely talented. He was in love with his wife that day and still is."

Doth thou protest too much? Who gets their producer on record to talk about the state of their marriage?

See? I'm doing it too! Why can't we believe that a drop-dead handsome, successful matinee idol can be happily in love with someone not on his level, looks-wise? Also, aren't we at the place in society that he could come out if he wanted to? Or am I just dreaming big here?

Swift response to exes and their others

Taylor Swift had more exes on her mind at the Grammys than just Harry Styles, whom she mocked during her performance of We are Never Ever Getting Back Together. The lovelorn singer also made a point of avoiding ex-boyfriend John Mayer and his current squeeze, Katy Perry, despite being seated near each other, according to Us Weekly.

Taylor Swift

Gaga's pain puts concerts on hold

Lady Gaga

Lady Gaga has postponed her next four concerts because a joint inflammation condition called synovitis has left her unable to walk, she revealed on Twitter. "I've been hiding a show injury and chronic pain for sometime now. Over the past month it has worsened," the singer tweeted. "I've been praying it would heal. I hid it from my staff, I didn't want to disappoint my amazing fans. However, after last night's performance I could not walk and still can't." Makeup dates for the cancelled shows have yet to be announced.

Martin a dad

Steve Martin reportedly became a dad for the first time when his 41-year-old wife, Anne Stringfield, "had a baby" in December, according to the New York Post, but the real story is that the 67-year-old comedian has managed to keep the story under wraps. "How they kept it a secret nobody knows," a source says. "Steve's very private They are thrilled. They worked hard to have the baby." The pair was recently spotted with a baby in L.A.

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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

London calling: Theophilus and the finer things

Trinidadian-born American rapper Theophilus London now calls Brooklyn his home. HANDOUT

The song and pants. Young artist helping to usher in an era where hip hop and High Street go hand in hand

RICHARD PECKETT
life@metronews.ca

"Kids used to want to be rappers, but now they want to be fashion designers, which is cool. It's an education," says Theophilus London. The New-York-based rapper is talking about his legions of fans and network of starry friends, which he refers to as "kids." But in terms of the music industry, London, at 25, is still a youth himself — though a savvy one.

In fact, he's probably had more magazine and newspaper profiles (GQ, Esquire, Elle, The New York Times) and fashion collaborations (Cole Haan, Stüssy and Surface to Air) than he's had musical airtime. And he can name drop with the best of them. Solange Knowles is "like family, like a sister." He casually mentions seeing mood boards out at Kanye West's house. Those are some impressive connections considering that London, who was actually born in Trinidad, has only released one album, an EP and a selection of mix tapes.

Usually the lucrative endorsement spoils are rewarded after years of toil, making records or movies. However, London has managed to capitalize off of his personal style and cool credibility first.

"Rappers used to be wearing Air Jordans. I still wear them. But now, the progressive kids are more educated and wanting Givenchy, Rick Owens or Alexander Wang. And Kanye's clothes — they're dope," he says.

While London is answering my interview questions from the set of a Chevrolet commercial, he swears he approaches it all with a strategy and awareness that extends beyond the next commercial paycheque. "I'd never do anything with McDonald's, for example. They're not moral," he says. "I have my own agenda." For now, that includes a new album coming out this summer and planned collaborations with Azealia Banks and Frank Ocean. "I never do things just for the money. I have to believe in it."

Hipster hop

"Rappers used to be wearing Air Jordans. I still wear them. But now, the progressive kids are more educated and wanting Givenchy, Rick Owens or Alexander Wang."

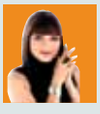
Theophilus London

Independently inspired

A studied approach to style

"The black suit and hat that I'm wearing on the cover of my first album, Timez Are Weird These Days, was inspired by Leon Ware (the writer behind Marvin Gaye's I Want You record). I got a lot of work off of the back of that. I know how to dress. I have a look and I don't need a stylist to tell me what to wear," London said.

Twitter



JEANNE SPACE
Jeanne Beker
life@metronews.ca

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@Jeanne_Beker: With American fashion genius @MrRalphRucci who just walked me through his stellar fall collection...

@Jeanne_Beker: Elegant gowns sweep the runway at Oscar... A at Semaine Mode Montreal...

The Kit

Canadian street style

Spotted in: Ottawa

Nicole, Student

Age: 25

What she's wearing
Vintage hat, sunglasses from a market in South Korea, Costa Blanca jacket, vintage fur muff (worn as shawl), Coach bag, Guess jeans, The Bay boots.

Her inspiration
"I am inspired by creative individuals I see in everyday life. I love how different people can put together unique looks. I really love people-watching and get a lot of my style inspiration from that."

THE KIT PHOTOBLOGGER: KATARINA KURUC, LOVEK.ORG

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Younger Jenneration eyes sister success

Ready to rock the runways. Kendall and Kylie come out of the shadow of their reality-star siblings with first fashion line

Kendall and Kylie Jenner
HARRISON / GETTY IMAGES FOR HEART TRUTH / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kendall and Kylie Jenner are taking a cue from big sisters Kourtney, Kim and Khloe Kardashian — launching their own clothing line.

Kendall, 17, and Kylie, 15, teamed up with PacSun to put out clothes aimed at teen girls.

"We watched our sisters do their clothing line (Kardashian Kollection for Sears) — when the opportunity came to us, we jumped on it. We've always been interested in fashion and all that so it was great and worked out perfectly," Kylie said in a recent interview.

The line has a California feel because the girls are from there.

Both girls model. Last week they walked in the annual Heart Truth Red Dress Fashion Show in New York with their mother, Kris. They insist they're not competitive with one another.

"No, not at all. I think we're both in two kind of separate areas," said Kendall, who is more serious about a modelling career.

Style in sight

"We've always been interested in fashion and all that so it was great and worked out perfectly."
Kylie Jenner on the PacSun collaboration

Kylie, on the other hand, would like to put out a line one day on her own. She also would like to try acting.

The teens are also taking a page from their older sisters by entering the publishing world. The Kardashian sisters have already released two books, a memoir and a novel. The Jenner sisters are writing a sci-fi, young adult book that's due out later this year.

One way they're not in a rush to emulate their sisters, though, is by starring in their own spin-off show.

"We're so young. I want to keep some part of my childhood private. I've been doing this since I was nine years old," said Kylie.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A trio of looks from designer Melissa Nepton are seen during the Target Emerging Designer Award show at Montreal Fashion Week. TARGET-JIMMY HAMELIN / THE CANADIAN PRESS

This girl's on Target

One glam b-day gift. Designer presented opportunity to create line for fashion giant

Montreal designer Melissa Nepton capped off her 32nd birthday in grand fashion by winning $25,000, a magazine spread, and the chance to put her stylish stamp on a line for Target.

Nepton was crowned winner of the Target Emerging Designer Award during the closing night show of Montreal Fashion Week. The award is also linked to the Designers Fund, a joint initiative of Sensation Mode, the firm which organizes Montreal Fashion Week, and the Montreal Fashion Foundation.

Nepton was among a select group of up-and-coming Quebec designers competing for a chance to design a collection for Target stores opening in the province.

Award entrants were asked to provide a sample portfolio of three designs for men, women or both capturing the essence of a proposed fall-winter collection for Target. A panel of judges scored based on visual appearance, style, communication and marketability.

Nepton's pieces included a striped jersey dress, silk chiffon blouse and wool coat.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Eyes on the prize

- Nepton will create an apparel collection to be sold at Target's Quebec stores in 2014. The U.S. discount giant is set to open 25 stores across the province beginning this fall.
- Nepton will also be featured in Elle Quebec magazine. And she received a $25,000 grant, which she said she'll use for marketing for the runway and a lookbook.

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Even you can have a stylish kitchen

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
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Trendy. Useful stylist tricks to make your kitchen look fabulous

With so many kitchens being designed smaller in size and open concept to fit our living spaces, it's important that they function well but look good at all times.

From someone who staged, propped and styled rooms for magazines and television shows for many years, here's a few stylist tricks to make your kitchen — no matter how large, small, high-end or low-end — look great at all times.

Repackage

Put packaged necessities in attractive display containers. Your favourite pasta, granola and espresso beans can be stored in decorative containers and displayed on the counter or behind glass doors.

Hint:
When displaying storage containers like baskets, jars or boxes, rely on the repeat method to help simplify the overall look. Using three to five of the same containers will allow a kitchen to look less eclectic.

Small scale

Look for space-saving countertop appliances in a small kitchen. Small and efficient appliances will save space and still offer up all the conveniences of a large kitchen.

Stand tall

Stand up trays, cutting boards and platters to hide unattractive backsplash. Choose fun shapes and trend-setting colours to help bring a boring kitchen to life. They even work standing up in the back of an open shelf or inside a glass-fronted cabinet. Got a really ugly backsplash? Try leaning a long dressing mirror horizontally across the back of the counter.

No faux pas

Mix artificial plants with real herbs/flowers. Every kitchen, no matter what size, needs a lush look. Adding real herbs and small plants with faux will extend the lush look long after the herbs have been used up and the next shopping day is near.

Tray it

Keep everyday items clustered on a tray. A tray filled with your morning French press, artificial sweeteners, bean grinder and your favourite mug will not only keep the counter looking tidy but keep you organized in the morning. Another tray with olive oils, dried herbs, vinegars, salt and pepper keeps the stove side organized for action.

Are you wearing colourful chemicals on your fingernails?

QUEEN OF GREEN
Tovah Paglaro
green@metronews.ca

Non-toxic nail polish for Valentine's Day is so much sexier.

If red nails are part of your valentine's plans, show yourself some love and choose a non-toxic option.

Many Canadians mistakenly believe that since nail polish is widely available on store shelves and since it sports no warning label, it is free of health risks. Unfortunately, this isn't the case.

Although cosmetic producers in Canada are required to disclose product ingredients, they don't have to warn you about the health concerns associated with those ingredients.

According to the David Suzuki Foundation, 80 per cent of cosmetics contain at least one ingredient linked to health and environmental concerns.

Your bottle of nail polish likely contains at least three.

When shopping for a new bottle of Cherry Red, take care to avoid the following common chemicals of concern found in nail products:

According to the David Suzuki Foundation, 80 per cent of cosmetics contain at least one ingredient linked to health and environmental concerns. ISTOCK IMAGES

1. Dibutyl phthalate (DBP)
Used as a plasticizer to prevent nail polishes from becoming brittle, this phthalate is classified by the EU as a suspected endocrine disruptor. In children, it's associated with liver and kidney failure when sucked or chewed. For this reason, Health Canada banned the use of DBP in soft vinyl children's toys, but its use in cosmetics is not restricted.

2. Formaldehyde and formaldehyde releasing ingredients
The International Agency for Research on Cancer classifies formaldehyde as a known human carcinogen, but there are no restrictions on the use of formaldehyde-releasing preservatives (like DMDM hydantoin, diazolidinyl urea, imidazolidinyl urea, methenamine, quaternium-15 and sodium hydroxymethylglycinate) in nail polish. Formaldehyde itself is allowed in concentrations up to five per cent in nail polish hardeners.

3. Toluene
Toluene is a paint thinner that adversely affects the central nervous system when vapours are inhaled. According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, short-term exposure can lead to temporary loss of coordination and headaches, confusion and dizziness. Repeated exposure presents more serious health risks. Ironically, it's also a skin irritant and prolonged contact can cause dermatitis.

Luckily, you can have your cake (or heart-shaped candy) and eat it too.

In recent years, non-toxic nail polishes have made a splash in the cosmetic world, making it simple to enjoy a manicure without the toxic worries. Reading the labels is the place to start. For brand recommendations, The Environmental Working Group's Skin Deep database is the absolute go-to. It's searchable and includes an extensive list of product ratings, ingredient disclosures and other resources.

Or, if a quick list of suggestions is more your style, check out Care2's recent list of non-toxic nail polishes.

Cleaning secrets

It's true: ketchup can be used to clean copper. ISTOCK IMAGES

Some people put ketchup on everything

Dear Mr. Butler,
My friend says that besides ketchup being a great condiment, you can use ketchup to clean metal. Is this true or is she pulling my leg?
-Ketchup Lover

CHARLES THE BUTLER
askcharlesthebutler@metronews.ca
For more, visit charlesmacpherson.com

Dear Ketchup Lover,

Your friend is correct. Ketchup is first and foremost a great condiment, but if used on copper it is a good cleaner for removing light tarnishing as well.

This is how I have tried it in the past with great success: wash the copper pot using normal dish soap, dry, then take a liberal amount of ketchup and spread it all over the copper surface.

Let it stand for a good 20 to 30 minutes. Rinse with warm water and repeat if necessary. So why does this work? Well the magic is all in the ketchup.

It is actually the acid from the tomatoes that act as the cleaning agent. The myth is true!

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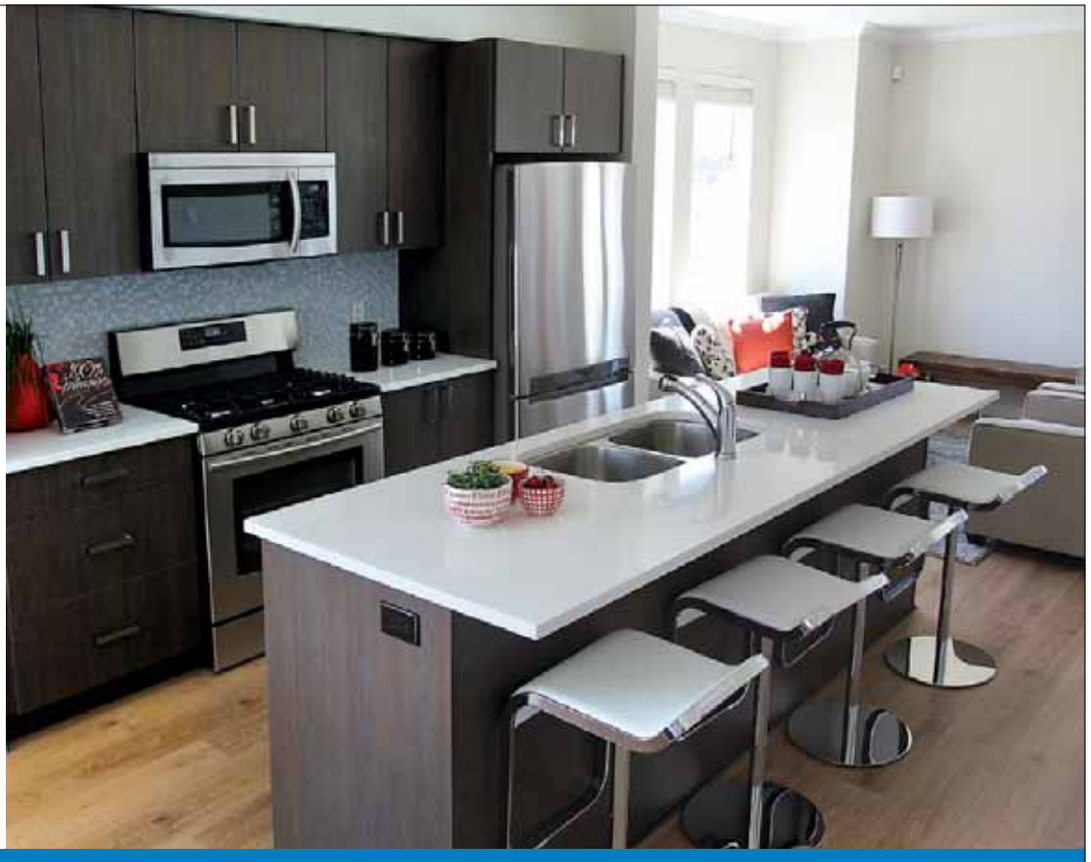

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Know your handyman dos and don'ts

DIY. Feel like you can tackle any project? Some may be out of your league, says Bryan Baeumler

In the new season of Canada's Handyman Challenge on HGTV Canada, hopeful amateur handymen from across Canada compete in challenges ranging from hanging wallpaper to wiring a three-way switch to building an entire deck.

One of the judges of the series, Bryan Baeumler, is here to give you insight into which projects you should learn to tackle at home — and when to call in the experts.

Tune in

Watch Bryan in Canada's Handyman Challenge airing Tuesdays at 10 p.m. on HGTV Canada.

Handyman Dos

Tiling and flooring
Tiling a floor at home is straightforward and simple to execute. It does take some precision and patience when laying out the tiles and measuring appropriately, however the physical work of tiling and grouting is something that people can definitely do at home.

Painting
Updating your home with a new paint colour is an easy and cost efficient way to update a space. Getting familiar with this skill will become very useful in any home — as will mastering the precise trim work painting.

Decorative finishes
Anything decorative is a great project for an at-home handyman, whether it's the jobs above or more detailed work such as wallpaper.

Handyman Don'ts

Electrical
It's every professional's worst nightmare to be hired for a renovation and find that previous homeowners have tried their hand at re-wiring. This is where you absolutely should hire a professional — those without the skills and knowledge required run the risk of damaging their home.

Structural
When the renovation you're considering is large enough to warrant taking down a wall or moving the basic structure of your home, it's time to call a professional.

Plumbing
Similar to electrical, a professional plumber will have the skills and knowledge to work on your home, things that Google just can't teach an average homeowner.

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When Pantone LLC announced that emerald green was its colour of the year for 2013, reaction among designers and interior consultants was mixed. According to Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of Pantone's research arm — the Pantone Color Institute — greens have been strong for awhile because of interest in nature. She calls green "a colour of growth, renewal, healing, unity and regeneration." So can you decorate with emerald green without being overwhelmed by it?

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

7 ways to introduce the colour of the year into your home

JCPenney emerald green bedding set

In a new partnership with Pantone, JCPenney launches a bedding and bath collection that includes emerald green.

Lamps Plus Greens Circle Rings Ovo table lamp

A smart, contemporary emerald green accent in a home.

For New York colour consultant Debra Kling, emerald green's boldness means it should be used only as an accent.

"Emerald might be one of those polarizing colours like purple — you either love it or hate it, and certainly could get tired of it fast," she says.

Other shelter style arbiters, however, such as Elle Decor, heralded the colour by featuring luxe goods in emerald green, including fabrics from Scalamandre, Schumacher and Phillip Jeffries, and Baccarat water glasses.

So can you decorate with emerald green without becoming overwhelmed by it? New York designer Elaine Griffin thinks you can, as long as you're careful.

"There's no getting around it, emerald is flat out dramatic. Which means it's best used in small doses, as accessories," she says.

For those liking the colour enough to consider paint, Griffin has a suggestion. "True emerald should go in tiny spaces like foyers or powder rooms, and then dining rooms, which always benefit from a theatrical touch. But it's too harsh a colour for rooms in which you linger."

Consider malachite accessories. "Malachite is emerald at its best, so take your inspiration from there. Malachite boxes, printed fabrics like Tony Duquette's for Jim Thompson, bedecked plates and table lamps are all fab," Griffin says.

Where shouldn't you use the hue?

"Avoid upholstering a long-term piece like a sofa in emerald — I promise the visual thrill will be gone in a matter of months," Griffin says.

HomeGoods emerald pillows

If you're uncertain about going big with this season's new emerald green, consider throw pillows like these, with just a little showing of the colour.

Lamps Plus Kite throw pillow

Feature an emerald green ikat print, a good way to introduce one of spring's brightest new colours.

Lamps Plus shows a table lamp

Arteriors Home's Roma lamp in emerald green cased glass is a great addition that freshens up a spring room.

HomeGoods emerald glasses

Baccarat offers an emerald green wine glass, but these glasses from HomeGoods are considerably less expensive.

HomeGoods emerald picture frames

Small accessories like picture frames introduce new colours without a major commitment.

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'Homes should tell the story of who we are'

Design book. Interior designer Nate Berkus talks about how to love where you live

He has a well-attuned eye for sprucing up spaces, but Nate Berkus isn't a stickler for rules when it comes to design — and he doesn't want homeowners to feel beholden to them, either.

"I feel there's so much information about design out there that it's rendered people really confused," Berkus said during a recent visit to Toronto in support of his home accessories line for Target.

The affable American interior designer has been a familiar presence on the small screen, dispensing design tips and conducting countless makeovers on The Oprah Winfrey Show and his own eponymous chatfest.

In his latest book, Berkus showcases his own home and shares details of those who have helped influence and define his sense of style.

He also features a dozen different interiors where owners "throw out the rules (and) drown out the noise" to reflect their own personalities within their homes.

"We all want to live better. We all want to love where we live. It doesn't matter what country you're living in or how much money you have or don't have — it's something that I've found is really universal," said Berkus.

"And the book is about the idea that our homes, most importantly, should tell the story of who we are, of who we aspire to be. That involves getting to know yourself fairly well and breaking a lot of rules and not listening to your loudest girlfriend or your mother-in-law. It's really forging your own way."

Berkus said he wouldn't expect someone to purchase all the goods from his collection and feel their room is complete, which "goes against his philosophy about design." Instead, he wants individuals to zero in on particular elements — such as textures and shapes — to pair with existing pieces to help cultivate their own style.

Berkus said a good rule of thumb for design neophytes or individuals looking to refresh their interiors is to select a colour palette.

Uncertain of whether to opt for emerald green, ruby red, royal blue or another hue within the colour wheel? A peek into the wardrobe could offer some insight. Berkus said the colours individuals feel most at ease or familiar wearing could help with the decision.

"If the interior's going to be grey and white, or grey and white and citrus, then you have at least a loose guide that you know when you buy things ... that they'll all work together," he said.

"I think if vibrant colour — and lots of vibrant colour — is something that makes you smile and makes you feel good, then that's something you should be reaching for," he added. "If you're a person that wears all black or a multi-coloured pattern dress, it depends on what you reach for and what makes you the most comfortable and the most inspired."

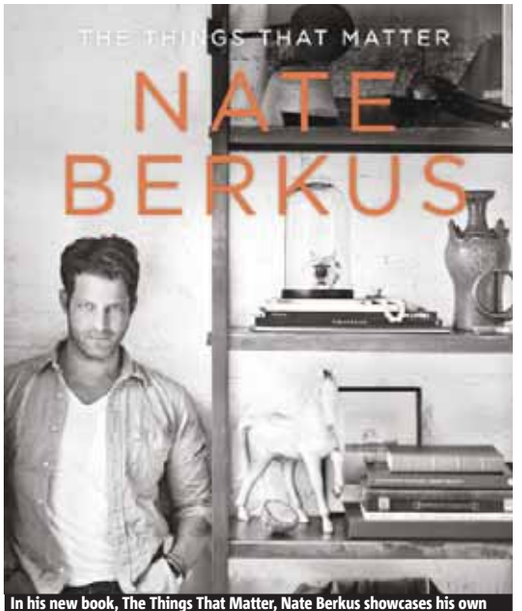
Meanwhile, Berkus is taking the opposite approach in his own space, currently "subtracting colour" by reverting to white from grey for his walls and focusing more on bringing in texture.

Berkus personally favours well-constructed, good-quality items made by hand or of natural materials rather than decorating interiors with poorly made pieces "just for the look."

"For me, I'm much more interested in a basket that's $3 from a market in the Virgin Islands than I am in something from an art gallery or something that's made out of plastic.

"I tend to gravitate toward things that are made by hand or feel handwrought because I think that you can start mixing those things in with antiques, with traditional, with contemporary, with modern. And it just creates texture, and the home starts to feel layered over time."

THE CANADIAN PRESS



In his new book, The Things That Matter, Nate Berkus showcases his own home and shares details of those who have helped influence and define his sense of style. HANDOUT

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Make your basement an inviting area

Untapped treasures. Subterranean spaces often get ignored in decor — jazz them up!

It's easy to find advice on decorating nearly every inch of your home.

Kitchens, living rooms, bedrooms, baths — even mudrooms and closets get attention. But the lowly basement gets short shrift.

These spaces present a host of decorating challenges, from low ceilings and limited natural light to never-ending battles with dampness and even flooding.

Kathryn Bechen, author of the new Small Space Organizing (Revell Books), first tackled basement decorating while living in a tiny basement apartment.

Years later, she preaches the same decorating techniques that helped make her underground rental into a cosy home: Decide exactly how you'll use your basement, and then either embrace its dark coziness or use colour, texture and the right furnishings to bring the illusion of bright, open space.

She and interior designers Brian Patrick Flynn, founder of decordemon.com, and Kyle Schuneman, an expert on decorating small spaces, offer advice on making basements beautiful.

Lighten up or embrace the dark

"Since there's usually a major lack of natural light in basements," Flynn says, "inject light by using muted colour and tons of white. What I often do is stick with muted greys on the walls, then use ultra-white on ceilings to help bounce light throughout the space. But to make it more punchy, I toss in a super-saturated accent colour such as fire-engine red, grassy green or orange."

Using plenty of floor and table lamps will also help, and Bechen says the old advice about mirrors shouldn't be ignored: Strategically placing a mirror opposite even a tiny basement window will help maximize light.

Go bold

All three designers believe basements are perfect spots for bold decorating.

Experiment with colours you don't normally use or indulge in theme decorating that might feel like overkill if you did it throughout your house.

Basements are perfect "for having a retro moment," Schuneman says, since many of them feature vintage wood paneling and decorative touches that have been in place for decades.

You're not creating a stage set, he says. But if there are vintage pieces already in your basement, why not amplify that look rather than removing it?

Change the ceiling

"Many basements have drop-down ceilings, which are definitely practical since it makes for easy access to plumbing and electrical," Flynn says.

But inexpensive drop-down tiles are often unattractive and look cheap.

"I usually recommend high-end ceiling tiles with architectural detail. They're double or triple the price of basic drop ceiling tiles, but they give a much more sophisticated look. Plus, you can install them yourself."

Warm up the floor

First, choose materials that can handle moisture.

Even basements that don't normally flood can still have a buildup of moisture. Schuneman recommends laminate flooring or vinyl floor tiles for durability and for style: Thanks to improved technology, he says, "there's some really rad stuff out there."

Bechen recommends cork flooring, which is durable, warm and soft underfoot. And Flynn recommends FLOR carpet tiles. "You can install them yourself," he says, "plus they can come up if the floor gets wet, then you can take them outside and dry them in the sun."

Organic elements

"Basements don't have to be all concrete and plastic," Flynn says. "I like to incorporate organic elements wherever possible, such as sisal on a stairwell. The rough texture is great for traction, and it creates more of an inviting, residential feeling upon entry to a basement."

What about windows?

- If you decide not to invest in new windows, you can increase the energy efficiency of your existing ones: "Storm windows are certainly a good idea," Selzer said.
- Insulating draperies or other window treatments also can help increase comfort. "They're so much more tailored and thinner than they used to be," she said.

Inject light in a basement with plenty of muted greys and bright whites. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Sharing the love on Valentine's Day!

We asked our Metropolitan Panel what their plans are this Valentine's Day and who they'll be sharing their special day with.

60% Love it
8% Hate it
32% Dont care
How do you feel about Valentine's Day?
27% You bet
0% Heck no
73% We'll see how it goes
Will you be doing anything special this Valentine's Day?
8% I confess! I have!
75% Most certainly not!
17% Depends what you mean by celebrate
Have you ever celebrated Valentine's Day with more than one significant other?

Whatever your plans are today we hope you'll be sharing it with someone special.

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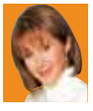
A healthy dose of sweetness for your funny valentine

Triple Chocolate Brownies

This recipe serves 12. LORELLA ZANETTI, FROM ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS)



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With all of the sweet and sticky candy and chocolate you may consume on V-Day, why not try something a bit lighter?

These brownies, which I created for the Mövenpick restaurant chain in Toronto, are only 140 calories and seven grams of fat per serving. The cocoa, oil and yogurt that replace traditional butter and chocolate are the way to keep the calorie and fat count low.

If that's not enough to convince you to whip these up, consider that Mövenpick sells 1,500 of these brownies per month.

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Spray an 8-inch-square pan with cooking oil.

2. For the brownies, combine the sugar, oil, egg and vanilla in a bowl and mix well. Add the cocoa, mixing it in well. Add the flour, baking powder, yogurt and chocolate chips, mixing just until combined and smooth. Don't over mix.

3. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake in the center of the oven for 15 to 20 minutes, just until set. Do not overbake. Cool on a rack for 15 minutes before icing.

4. To make the icing, place all the icing ingredients, except for the sugar, in a blender or food processor and process until smooth. Spread over the top of the brownies.

5. Cut into squares and garnish with a dusting of icing sugar, or drizzle melted white chocolate. **ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY ROSE REISMAN**

Ingredients

Brownies
- 2/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 cup low-fat yogurt or sour cream
- 1/4 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Icing
- 1/3 cup light cream cheese
- 2/3 cup icing sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 1/2 tsp water
- dusting of icing sugar

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Sara Jenkin's New Italian Pantry (iPad; $3.99)

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WHL

Blazers drop Giants 4-1

The Vancouver Giants lost to the Kamloops Blazers 4-1 on Wednesday night, despite playing well for long stretches of the game.

The Blazers struck first with defenceman Joel Edmundson splitting the Giants D for a breakaway goal in the opening period. Aside from that one bad play, the Giants played a well-composed first period and were often the stronger team on the puck.

They kept up their strong play early on in the second, with defenceman Arvin Atwal scoring his second career goal to tie the game at 2:01.

But Kamloops went up 3-1 with goals from centres Matt Needham and Colin Smith. Smith, a Colorado Avalanche prospect, is third in WHL goals and points with 37 and 90, respectively, and leads the Blazers in scoring.

After falling behind, the Giants seemed to play with less care and had difficulty clearing their zone and entering their opponent's.

Kamloops kept up the pressure in the third, and left-winger Kale Kessy made it 4-1 for the Blazers at 6:14.

The loss drops the Giants to 14-43 for the season. They begin a four-game road trip on Friday, and their next home game is a rematch with Kamloops on Feb. 22.

LIAM BRITTEN/FOR METRO

Giant Jason Trott is seen bloodied up in Vancouver's 4-1 loss to the Blazers. LIAM BRITTEN/FOR METRO

Whitecaps looking to Ghana for talent

MLS. Aminu Abdallah and Emmanuel Adjetey are currently with the Vancouver MLS club on a trial basis

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

Vancouver Whitecaps midfielder Gershon Koffie, front, was originally recruited from Ghana. Two more players from Ghana, Aminu Abdallah and Emmanuel Adjetey, are currently with the Whitecaps on a trial basis. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Gershon Koffie was the first.

Now Aminu Abdallah and Emmanuel Adjetey are hoping their trials with the Vancouver Whitecaps prove fruitful as they join the Major League Soccer club in Charleston, S.C., for the next phase of the preseason.

Koffie, a central midfielder, came from the African nation of Ghana to Vancouver and the Whitecaps, officially signing for one of the club's first international spots in February 2011.

In two Major League Soccer seasons Koffie has shown a steady progression in the level of his play, and at just 21 years of age it's a good bet his best days are still to come.

Abdallah, a midfielder who turned 19 on Jan. 7, and Adjetey, a 24-year-old defender, both from Ghana, are trying to carve paths similar to that of their fellow countryman.

Tommy Soehn, the former Whitecaps director of soccer operations, first discovered Koffie on a scouting mission in 2010, thus laying the foundation for a pipeline into that nation's soccer reservoir.

The Whitecaps may be looking to take another dip.

"There's just a very deep talent pool of players in Ghana," said Greg Anderson, the Whitecaps director of professional teams.

"And so, obviously signing Gershon created a bit of a relationship with the club. We went over on another scouting trip at the end of last year and identified a few players we thought might be able to help us."

Abdallah and Adjetey arrived in Vancouver last Friday. Koffie played host, introducing them to the sights of the city.

Both trialists took part in Monday's scrimmage against Trinity Western University, and they were among the 34 to make the trip to Charleston on Wednesday.

It's there that the coaching staff will be able to better evaluate Abdallah and Adjetey.

The different style of soccer in North America compared to Ghana might be the biggest adjustment for both.

"There's a lot of differences," said head coach Martin Rennie.

"Here it's obviously a different level of professionalism; the facilities are different. I think there's a more physical style to the game here. People are a little bit stronger, maybe, in terms of the work they've done in the gym and things like that.

"But these guys are naturally very good players, naturally very strong, and once they get the right nutrition, the right work in the gym, they could be very good players."

Quoted

"Soccer ... is truly a global game and we have the whole world to draw (from) when it comes to recruiting talent." Greg Anderson, Vancouver Whitecaps director of professional teams

Southsiders booted from Canucks game

Two members of the Vancouver Whitecaps support group, the Southsiders, were ejected from the upper-bowl seats at Rogers Arena during Tuesday's Canucks game, prompting talk about the atmosphere at local NHL contests.

Brett Graham, president of the Southsiders, told Metro that 75 members from the support group were in attendance in the upper bowl at Rogers Arena to watch the Canucks defeat the Minnesota Wild.

The Southsiders are a mainstay at Whitecaps games, standing throughout Major League Soccer matches, dancing and chanting.

"That's what we did for the first period," said Graham.

"At the intermission, between the first and second (periods), a large number of security and staff came up and told us that we were no longer allowed to stand unless we were in the very back row.

"At that point, two of our members were ejected from the arena for what they deemed to be disrespectful to event staff for questioning their rules. We were told we were allowed to stand on goals and one of our members (said), 'Well, what about this? What about this?' At that point he was ejected."

Fans known as the Southsiders cheer at a Vancouver Whitecaps game on March 10, 2012, at BC Place. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Graham was asked if other fans had complained to the Southsiders, but he said he was "pleasantly surprised" at the positive feedback the supporters received for their enthusiasm from those in nearby sections.

Canucks chief operating officer Victor de Bonis told Team 1040 radio Wednesday that senior security staff with "a lot of experience" were deployed to the section.

"It seemed like they were really into it and quite engaged and they brought a dynamic that we really don't see often," said de Bonis.

"It was just unfortunate that a couple of the Southsiders there got a little offside ... a little bit aggressive, and that's what happened."

CAM TUCKER/METRO

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Managing Canucks' glut of talent will be tough order for Vigneault

THE HOCKEY NEWS
Edward Fraser
vancouver@metronews.ca

It wasn't long ago there were questions regarding the future of Mason Raymond and, to a lesser extent, Jannik Hansen in Vancouver. There was also worry over whether first-rounders Jordan Schroeder and Zack Kassian were destined to be busts.

Now the quartet is the main reason the Canucks are, outside of perhaps Chicago, the NHL's best team.

Entering this season, with Ryan Kesler and David Booth out for extended time, there were valid concerns over secondary scoring. The Sedins were going to produce and the goalies and top-four defencemen, once they got settled, were going to be solid to spectacular. No questions. No surprises.

Now, riding a six-game win streak, everything is working from top to bottom. Heck, the third defence pairing of Chris Tanev and Keith Ballard (another one put on the Vancouver Extinction Watchlist last year) has been the club's most consistent.

Happy returns?

"Despite the fact you don't fix what ain't broke, however, change is on the horizon."

Despite the fact you don't fix what ain't broke, however, change is on the horizon. Kesler and Booth are back on the ice and will be ready for game action in relatively short order, and you can't hold players of Kesler and Booth's calibre out of the lineup. What impact will the returns have? Can the current secondary scoring continue to roll once the injured pair is re-inserted? How long will it take for Kesler and Booth to shake off the rust? Subtraction through addition is a real concern.

The current production does allow the team to be patient, waiting for each player to be 100 per cent before coming back and easing them back into the lineup.

Kesler won't make the same mistake and return early, but you can be sure the din of discontent would be growing if the Canucks were struggling. With Booth, it's best to play it safe. The slightest setback while recovering from a groin injury can put a player back on the shelf for months.

The day, alas, will come when everyone is healthy and Vancouver will have 11 top-nine forwards. All this talent would appear to be good problem to have, but coach Alain Vigneault will have his work cut out in finding a balance, and the chemistry, to keep the good times rolling.

Vancouver Canucks centre Jordan Schroeder, centre, celebrates his second goal with teammates, from left, Jannik Hansen, Mason Raymond and Christopher Tanev on Saturday in Vancouver. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chopping block

Wrestling leader to argue for sport with IOC head

Facing a wave of criticism from around the world, IOC president Jacques Rogge will meet with the head of wrestling's governing body to discuss ways the sport can fight to save its place in the Olympics.

The IOC executive board dropped wrestling from the program of the 2020 Games on Tuesday, a decision that brought a sharp backlash from wrestling organizations and national Olympic bodies around the world — including Canada, the United States, Russia and Iran.

The move must still be ratified by the full International Olympic Committee in September, giving wrestling time to try to overturn a decision against a sport that dates back to the ancient Olympics and has been featured since the inaugural modern games in 1896.

Rogge said Wednesday he has been contacted by Raphael Martinetti, the Swiss president of international wrestling federation FILA, and was encouraged by the sport's resolve to make changes and fight for its place.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Curling. Ontario skip to enjoy home ice at Scotties

Ontario skip Rachel Homan showed in her first appearance at the Scotties Tournament of Hearts that she could hang with the top rinks from around the country.

She's set to make a return appearance at the Canadian women's curling championship, which kicks off Saturday in Kingston, Ont., and hopes to make more than just a playoff appearance this time around.

"We've been there before and we made it all the way to the semis our first time," Homan said of her 2011 showing. "I think this time our team has grown a bit, has got more experience and we expect to be right there hopefully battling in the final if we can."

At 23, the Ottawa skip is one of the best young players in the game. Her rink of third Emma Miskew, second Alison Kreviazuk and lead Lisa Weagle holds the third spot in the Canadian Team Ranking System.

Homan will also have a supportive Ontario crowd on her side when play begins at the K-Rock Centre. There are several experienced skips in the 12-rink competition, including defending champ Heather Nedohin of Alberta, B.C.'s Kelly Scott, Manitoba's Jennifer Jones and Nova Scotia's Mary-Anne Arsenault.

Ontario skip Rachel Homan
THE CANADIAN PRESS

"It looks like a really tough field," Homan said. "Lots of teams with lots of experience, a lot more years than us. But we've had our fair share of finals and playoffs and TV games and things like that."

Homan posted a 13-0 record in the 2010 national junior playdowns and won a silver medal at the world junior championships that year.

"We can't wait to go and we really want to do Ontario proud and see how far we can go," she said.

Round-robin play continues through Feb. 22 and the final is set for Feb. 24.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	35	14	.714	—
New York	32	18	.640	3½
Indiana	32	21	.604	5
Brooklyn	31	22	.585	6
Chicago	30	22	.577	6½
Atlanta	29	22	.569	7
Boston	28	24	.538	8½
Milwaukee	26	25	.510	10
Philadelphia	22	29	.431	14
Toronto	**21**	**32**	**.396**	**16**
Detroit	21	33	.389	16½
Cleveland	16	37	.302	21
Washington	15	36	.294	21
Orlando	15	37	.288	21½
Charlotte	12	40	.231	24½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	42	12	.778	—
Oklahoma City	39	13	.750	2
L.A. Clippers	37	17	.685	5
Memphis	33	18	.647	7½
Denver	33	21	.611	9
Golden State	30	22	.577	11
Utah	30	24	.556	12
Houston	29	25	.537	13
Portland	25	28	.472	16½
L.A. Lakers	25	28	.472	16½
Dallas	23	29	.442	18
Minnesota	19	31	.380	21
New Orleans	19	34	.358	22½
Sacramento	19	35	.352	23
Phoenix	17	36	.321	24½

Note: division leaders ranked in top three positions regardless of winning percentage.

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS
San Antonio 96 Cleveland 95
Indiana 101 Charlotte 77
Atlanta 108 Orlando 76
Brooklyn 119 Denver 108
Detroit 96 Washington 85
Boston 71 Chicago 69
Toronto 92 New York 88
Milwaukee 94 Philadelphia 92
New Orleans 99 Portland 63
Utah 97 Minnesota 93
Dallas 123 Sacramento 100
Houston at L.A. Clippers

TUESDAY'S RESULTS
Toronto 109 Denver 108
Miami 117 Portland 104
Memphis 108 Sacramento 101
Utah 109 Oklahoma City 94
Houston 116 Golden State 107
L.A. Lakers 91 Phoenix 85

THURSDAY'S GAMES — All Times Eastern
Miami at Oklahoma City, 8 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at L.A. Lakers, 10:30 p.m.

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
New Jersey	13	8	2	3	35	28	19
Pittsburgh	14	9	5	0	45	34	18
NY Rangers	12	7	5	0	33	30	14
Philadelphia	14	6	7	1	34	40	13
NY Islanders	12	4	7	1	36	43	9

NORTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Boston	11	8	1	2	32	25	18
Toronto	13	8	5	0	39	33	16
Ottawa	14	7	5	2	35	27	16
Montreal	12	7	4	1	35	33	15
Buffalo	14	5	8	1	39	48	11

SOUTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Carolina	12	7	4	1	38	36	15
Tampa Bay	12	6	5	1	46	36	13
Winnipeg	12	5	6	1	32	40	11
Florida	12	4	6	2	30	46	10
Washington	13	4	8	1	36	46	9

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	13	10	0	3	44	28	23
Detroit	13	7	4	2	36	36	16
Nashville	13	6	3	4	25	26	16
St. Louis	13	7	5	1	43	43	15
Columbus	13	4	7	2	30	41	10

NORTHWEST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Vancouver	12	8	2	2	35	25	18
Minnesota	13	6	6	1	27	32	13
Edmonton	13	5	5	3	29	34	13
Calgary	11	4	4	3	33	39	11
Colorado	11	4	6	1	23	29	9

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Anaheim	12	9	2	1	42	33	19
San Jose	13	7	3	3	36	29	17
Dallas	14	7	6	1	34	36	15
Phoenix	13	6	5	2	35	35	14
Los Angeles	11	4	5	2	26	32	10

Note: A team winning in overtime or shootout is credited with two points and a victory in the W column; the team losing in overtime or shootout receives one point which is registered in the OL (other loss) column.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	Pt
Vanek, Buf	11	12	23
Kane, Chi	9	11	20
Zetterberg, Det	5	13	18
Stamkos, TBL	7	10	17
Ribeiro, Wash	5	12	17
Crosby, Phg	5	12	17
St. Louis, TBL	3	14	17

Not including last night's games

RAPTORS 92, KNICKS 88

TORONTO (92)
Anderson 10-16 0-0 26, DeRozan 5-11 10-10 20, Lowry 3-8 5-6 12, Lucas 4-5 2-2 12, Gay 4-21 3-4 11, Johnson 2-4 1-2 5, Fields 2-4 0-0 4, Bargnani 1-1 0-0 2, Valanciunas 0-1 0-0 0, Ross 0-2 0-0 0. Totals 31-73 21-24 92.

NEW YORK (88)
Smith 8-17 5-8 26, Felton 3-9 10-12 16, Anthony 5-24 1-4 12, Chandler 4-6 2-2 10, Stoudemire 4-13 2-2 10, Novak 3-4 0-0 9, Shumpert 1-3 3-4 5, Kidd 0-3 0-0 0. Totals 28-79 23-32 88.

Toronto	**14**	**23**	**28**	**27 — 92**
New York	**18**	**24**	**18**	**28 — 88**

3-Point Goals—Toronto 9-21 (Anderson 6-8, Gay 0-5, Lowry 1-4, Lucas 2-3, DeRozan 0-1). New York 9-25 (Smith 5-10, Anthony 1-6, Novak 3-4, Kidd 0-3, Felton 0-2). **Rebounds—**Toronto 35 (Fields 10, Gay 8, Johnson 5, Valanciunas 5, DeRozan 4, Lowry 1, Lucas 1, Anderson 1). New York 52 (Anthony 12, Chandler 9, Stoudemire 7, Shumpert 7, Felton 4, Smith 4, Novak 4, Kidd 4, Prigioni 1). **Assists—**Toronto 12 (Gay 4). New York 12 (Felton 5).
Total Fouls—Toronto 20, New York 21.
Attendance—19,033 at New York. T—2:21

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS
Pittsburgh 4 Ottawa 2
St. Louis 4 Detroit 3 (OT)
Calgary 7 Dallas 4

TUESDAY'S RESULTS
Carolina 4 New Jersey 2
NY Rangers 4 Boston 3 (SO)
Montreal 4 Tampa Bay 3 (SO)
Ottawa 2 Buffalo 0
Washington 6 Florida 5 (OT)
Philadelphia 3 Winnipeg 2
Nashville 1 San Jose 0 (OT)
Anaheim 3 Chicago 2 (SO)
Dallas 4 Edmonton 1
Vancouver 2 Minnesota 1

THURSDAY'S GAMES — All Times Eastern
Toronto at Carolina, 7 p.m.
NY Islanders at NY Rangers, 7 p.m.
Montreal at Florida, 7:30 p.m.
Washington at Tampa Bay, 7:30 p.m.
Phoenix at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Colorado at Minnesota, 8 p.m.

FRIDAY'S GAMES
Pittsburgh at Winnipeg, 7 p.m.
Philadelphia at New Jersey, 7 p.m.
Boston at Buffalo, 7 p.m.
Anaheim at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
San Jose at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.
St. Louis at Calgary, 9 p.m.
Dallas at Vancouver, 10 p.m.
Columbus at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
It doesn't matter what you do today so long as you do something. If you sit still for more than a minute this morning, you may not get up again until the evening — and only to go back to bed.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
There is no point trying to judge people by your own standards. They will never match up. The best you can hope for, today and any other day, is that they learn from your good example. So go on, be one.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
The more others try to get you to change, the more you should stick with what you know and trust. No doubt they will come up with all sorts of reasons why you should take a risk, but don't do it.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
What sounds like bad news is nothing of the sort. Chances are you are looking at it from completely the wrong angle. Facts are facts, of course, but even facts can sometimes be open to interpretation.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You are not the sort to give up just because you failed at something once. Yes, you may be annoyed that you did not do a project justice, but there is still plenty of time to do it again and do it right.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
There is something you have to do today and even though it may be a total bore you know that until you see it through to completion partners and colleagues won't give you a moment's peace. Get started on it now.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You may hear a few whispers or rumours today, most likely about someone you like. You are advised to ignore them. Most likely, it is just nasty he said, she said. Even if it is true, it's still nothing to do with you.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Don't cut any corners today because someone important is watching and they will make a big deal of it. It may be that you have to do a lot of work for very little profit, but sometimes that's just how it is.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You don't have to put up with people who waste your precious time on trivial things. Tell them where to go today, and say it in a way that makes it clear you mean it.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You may be eager to make changes but you won't be able to push partners faster than they want to go today. Which begs the question: Have you signed up with the wrong partners? Give it some thought.

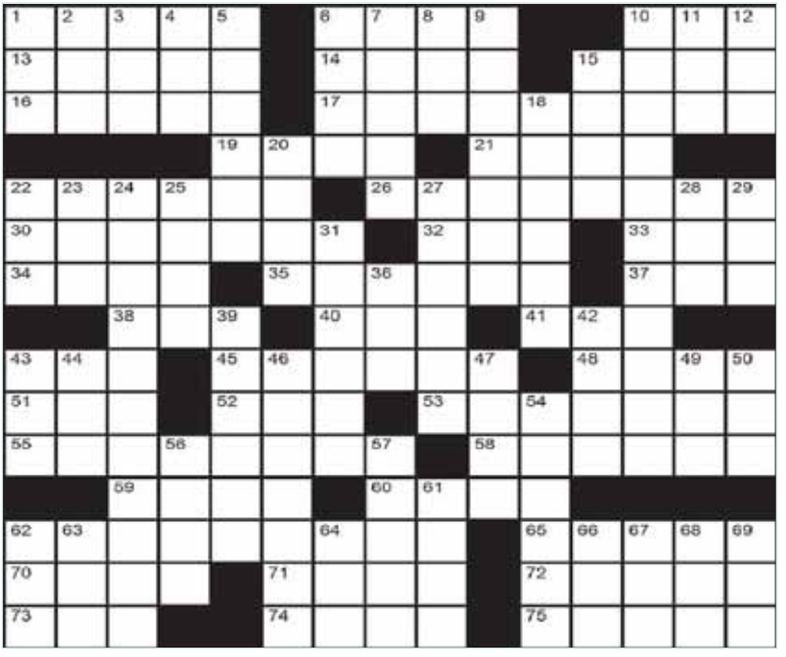
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
No matter how hard you try to persuade a friend or work colleague to see things your way, it just isn't going to happen, so give up. It's true, you know, some people are almost as stubborn as you!

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Other people may be selfish and put their own interests first but not you. With Mars, Mercury and Neptune all moving through your sign, you know it pays to be generous. The more you give now, the more you'll get later.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

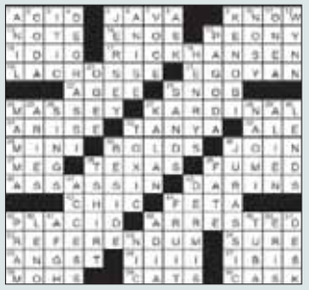
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Valentine's Day icon
6. "Rich Bride __ Bride" on Slice
10. Sisqo's group, __ Hill
13. Popeye's beloved
14. Sparkling wine city of Italy
15. Italian car manufacturer
16. Actress Kathy
17. Valentine's gift
19. Speck
21. Khloe Kardashian's husband, Lamar __
22. James Blunt album: 'Back to __'
26. Rocky sun-orbiter
30. Versus
32. Extra sports periods, for short
33. Perfume by Cacharel
34. Explosive star
35. Eucalyptus eaters
37. Horse coat hue
38. Bug
40. Deli bread
41. Nav. rank
43. Misfire
45. "That's being taken care of by me, boss!": 3 wds.
48. Isn't, wrong-style
51.Cute bark
52. 'Alma' add-on (Facts reference book)
53. Taylor of 'Twilight' flicks
55. __ Gold Rush
58. Canadian auto service company
59. Shaker stuff
60. Gardening tool
62. Emily Bronte's __ Heights
65. Himalayas land
70. Chemical suffixes
71. 'Susp' add-on
72. Curtain
73. Val-_'__, Quebec
74. Investigators, for short
75. "When Harry Met __..." (1989)

Down
1. Corn on the __
2. Suffix with 'Form'
3. Peach part
4. 'Excess' suffix
5. Canadian singer Shawn
6. Agreement
7. "Romeo and Juliet" (1968) actor Milo
8. Prefix that means 'Ear'
9. Cheese in lasagna
10. Blue Rodeo hit that goes "...our love shines like a...": 2 wds.
11. Alleyway animal
12. Sport-__ (Versatile vehicle)
15. Flower: Spanish
18. Ukraine port city
20. City of Russia
22. Ray-__ (Sunglasses maker)
23. Kind of boost
24. Grammy-winning record producer born in Victoria: 2 wds.
25. 1997 Jim Carrey comedy, when doubled
27. Cirque du __
28. Indebted one's letters
29. Mr. Aykroyd
31. "For Those About __ __ (We Salute You)" by AC/DC
36. Novelist Ms. Rand
39. Amazon e-book reader
42. Court
43. Fargo, North __.
44. www address
46. __ _' (Restaurant occupation)
47. Chore
49. "Waking __ Devine" (1998)
50. Otis Redding song: "__ a Little Tenderness"
54. Overturns
56. Nopes
57. Surrealist artist Max
61. 'Band' suffix (Medical supplies)
62. Tie the knot
63. Numero __
64. 'Benedict' suffix
66. Baseball pitcher's stat.
67. Chum
68. Fergie's bandmate, __.de.ap
69. Grassy field

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

		9	8	4		2		6
1		7	3					9
	6							
3		1			8			
		8				6		
			2			4		1
							9	
2					5	1		8
8		5		1	7	3		

Yesterday's Sudoku

6	2	9	7	8	1	5	4	3
5	1	3	6	4	9	2	8	7
8	7	4	2	3	5	9	1	6
1	9	7	3	2	8	4	6	5
4	5	2	9	7	6	8	3	1
3	8	6	1	5	4	7	2	9
2	6	1	4	9	7	3	5	8
7	3	5	8	1	2	6	9	4
9	4	8	5	6	3	1	7	2

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604-521-3338
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604-420-7979
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604-433-8000
Metrotown (Near T&T)
604-432-9303
Metropolis
604-430-3903
Brentwood Mall
604-320-0789

CHILLIWACK
Cottonwood Mall
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Hillcrest Village
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H-341 North Rd.
604-939-4777

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Bay Side Village
604-943-3602
5180 Ladner Trunk Rd.
604-946-7100
Scottsdale Mall
604-590-9011

LANGLEY
Willowbrook Mall
604-532-9099
Fraser Crossing
Shopping Centre
604-532-0440
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604-881-2050

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604-983-3025
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604-984-8900
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Aberdeen Centre
604-279-9187
Richmond Centre
604-273-2203
Lansdowne Mall Centre
604-247-2355
Aberdeen Centre
604-303-8811

SOUTH SURREY
Semiahmoo Mall
604-536-1010

SQUAMISH
3B-40437 Tantalus Rd.
604-898-3025

SURREY
Khalsa Business Mall
604-572-9955
Guildford Mall
604-951-9399
Central City
604-583-7000
Southpoint Exchange
604-531-2500
Newton Centre
604-599-5522
Peninsula Village
604-535-8828

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155-139 Keefer St.
604-683-8283
Bentall Centre Mall
604-602-0968
6510 Fraser St.
604-325-6665
Oakridge Mall
604-267-1011
2691 West Broadway
604-736-1813
5759 West Blvd.
604-267-6383
920 Davie St.
604-684-5981
Kingsgate Mall
604-879-1003
103-1807 Burrard St.
604-736-3326
Marketplace Village
604-221-5505
601 Robson St.
604-682-4333
1795 Robson St.
604-605-8290
1093 Robson St.
604-628-1388
148-555 West 12th Ave.
604-876-0888
1022 Mainland St.
604-608-2448
2097 West Broadway
604-733-3999
1295 Davie St.
604-669-7377
1027 – West 15th Ave.
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